

**Appendix A-2:
Newsletters**

Overflow Monitor

The Overflow Monitor

A Quarterly Publication
of the Allegheny County
Sanitary Authority

Volume 1, Number 1
Spring 2008

The Director's Connector

A Quarterly Message from
ALCOSAN's Executive Director



Welcome to the premier issue of The Overflow Monitor, ALCOSAN's quarterly newsletter. The goal of this publication is to provide information about the sewer overflow issue and encourage your involvement in what will be the largest capital project in the history of the region.

I cannot stress enough that in order to solve a problem of this magnitude, we must develop an atmosphere of cooperation among all stakeholders. By doing so, the potential exists to save time and money on a program estimated to cost in the billions of dollars.

While this newsletter and the ALCOSAN website can help to keep you informed, you must take the next step by becoming an active partner in the process. You can do this by attending ALCOSAN and municipal meetings, asking questions, practicing pollution prevention, removing stormwater from the system and ensuring that your sewer lines are in proper working condition.

I trust you will find the content of this publication useful and informative, and hope that you will take the time to relay your suggestions and feedback to the Authority using the contact information on page 2.

Arletta Scott Williams
Executive Director
ALCOSAN



An ALCOSAN work crew performs maintenance along the Saw Mill Run interceptor



Wastewater Collection and Conveyance:

Out of Sight, Never Out of Mind

Sometimes you have to believe in things you cannot see. While few people see the vast sewer system hidden beneath our neighborhoods, most trust that it will function properly each time a toilet is flushed or a sink is drained.

Problems do arise in the sewer system, however, and it is helpful to know the locations and roles of the various sewer lines and who is responsible for each.

The sewage collection and conveyance system consists of interconnecting lines or pipes. The first of these is the lateral line, which connects wastewater systems from homes or businesses to the municipal system.

In your home, wastewater from the bathroom, kitchen and laundry drains into the lateral line, which connects to the municipal sewer from either the front or rear of the property. Maintaining the lateral line is the responsibility of the property owner. Problems associated

with laterals include:

Infiltration - cracks in the line allow dirt and debris to infiltrate the line, causing a blockage which may cause sewage to back up into the home.

Leakage - a broken line can allow sewage from the home to leak into the ground.

Property owners experiencing a backup may choose to call a licensed plumber who will investigate the problem and recommend a solution.

Municipal lines are owned and maintained by the municipality in which they are located. These lines collect flow from homes and businesses and direct it into the conveyance system. Though most municipalities utilize either a combined sewer system or separate sewer system, some use a combination of both.

A combined sewer system accepts raw sewage and stormwater in the same sewer pipes. When a wet weather event

occurs, such as rainfall or snow melt, the pipe becomes inundated with this diluted wastewater which flows to the treatment plant or overflows to a river or creek.

A sanitary sewer system collects raw sewage and stormwater in separate pipes. Sewage flows to the treatment plant while stormwater is discharged into a nearby river, creek or stream.

Municipal lines direct wastewater flow to interceptor sewers owned and maintained by ALCOSAN. These interceptors are large-diameter pipelines along major drainage features (river, stream, etc.) that convey collected flow by gravity to either a pump station or treatment plant.

FLOW FACT: ALCOSAN owns and maintains 95 miles of interceptor sewers collecting wastewater flow from 83 communities covering approximately 311 square miles.

Sewer Overflows: Why You Should Be Concerned



A Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) occurs when stormwater and sewage, carried in a single pipe, overload the sewer system and flow untreated into rivers and streams. CSOs contain a variety of pollutants such as debris, chemicals, bacteria, and animal waste.

What is a sewage overflow? During wet weather (when it rains or snow melts), excess water overloads the deteriorated sewer system and overflows into rivers and streams or backs up into residents' basements without ever reaching the wastewater treatment facility. Hundreds of overflows occur across Allegheny County during each rainstorm.

Combined sewer overflows (CSOs) and sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) violate federal and state environmental laws. Regulatory agencies (Allegheny County Health Department, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the federal Environmental Protection Agency) are now requiring the region to fix the problem at a cost estimated to be billions of dollars.

Why is this occurring? The region's sewer system, parts of which are more than 100 years old, is showing its age. Sections of the sewer system lack capacity. Cracked and deteriorated pipes allow rain and snow melt to leak into the system. Overgrown tree roots in the pipes can inhibit flow. In addition, many households have improperly connected downspouts or sump pumps which force stormwater into the sewer lines designed to carry only sewage.

Why is it a concern? Sewage in our rivers, creeks, and streams is not only a threat to fish and other aquatic life, but can also be a public health risk for those who come in contact with the water. Waterways may be unacceptable for boating, swimming or fishing for days after it stops raining. In addition, nearly all Allegheny County residents get their drinking water from our rivers. Overflows pollute our source of drinking water and place a burden on water treatment facilities. Sewage overflows also impede economic development as communities can be restricted from tapping into sewers for new homes or businesses.

Who is responsible? Municipalities, wastewater treatment facilities and homeowners each have a significant role in solving the problem. Municipalities are now required by environmental regulators to address the problem by mapping their sewers, assessing and repairing broken lines, cleaning lines and measuring the flow of stormwater and wastewater during different weather conditions.

The goal is to reduce excess stormwater entering the system. In addition, regulators are requiring ALCOSAN and other wastewater treatment facilities to increase treatment capacity, reduce the frequency of combined sewer overflows, and reduce pollutants entering waterways.

Homeowners who are connected to a separate sanitary sewer system (designed to carry only sewage) must fix improper sewer connections on their property by disconnecting downspouts and driveway or foundation drains. Homeowners can also help by reducing the amount of water and pollutants entering the sewer system from their properties. This may include repairing broken laterals, planting vegetation to reduce stormwater runoff, using car wash facilities that recycle water, using toxin-free home and garden products, and refraining from using curb-side storm drains as garbage cans.

Unfortunately, solutions may cost billions of dollars. This is the most costly public works project ever faced by Allegheny County. Your sewer rates will likely increase to pay for improvements to the wastewater treatment facility and municipal collection system. In the meantime, municipalities are working along with ALCOSAN to develop the most cost-effective solutions.



A Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) occurs when a line designed to carry only sewage becomes overloaded with stormwater. This causes untreated sewage to overflow from manholes or back up into basements.



ALCOSAN Open House is Saturday, September 20, 2008! Look for details in the Summer issue of The Overflow Monitor.

The Overflow Monitor is published four times a year, Spring, Summer, Winter and Fall, by the ALCOSAN Public Relations Department. Articles and pictures may not be used in part or whole without the expressed written permission of ALCOSAN. Contact ALCOSAN Public Relations at 3300 Preble Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15233, call (412) 734-8733 or e-mail at kirsten.pastrick@alcosan.org.

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A Guide to ALCOSAN Service Communities

ALCOSAN is responsible for the collection, transportation, treatment and disposal of sewage in Allegheny County and parts of Washington and Westmoreland counties. This service area, representing a range of approximately 311 square miles and a population of about 900,000 residents, includes the following 83 communities:

| | | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Aspinwall | Dormont | Mt. Lebanon | Scott |
| Avalon | East McKeesport | Mt. Oliver | Shaler |
| Baldwin Borough | East Pittsburgh | Munhall | Sharpsburg |
| Baldwin Township | Edgewood | Neville | South Fayette |
| Bellevue | Emsworth | North Braddock | Stowe |
| Ben Avon | Etna | North Fayette | Swissvale |
| Ben Avon Heights | Forest Hills | North Versailles | Thornburg |
| Bethel Park | Fox Chapel | Oakdale | Trafford |
| Blawnox | Franklin Park | O'Hara | Turtle Creek |
| Braddock | Greentree | Ohio Township | Upper St. Clair |
| Braddock Hills | Heidelberg | Penn Hills | Verona |
| Brentwood | Homestead | Penn Township | Wall |
| Bridgeville | Indiana | Peters Township | West Homestead |
| Carnegie | Ingram | Pitcairn | West Mifflin |
| Castle Shannon | Kennedy | Pleasant Hills | West View |
| Cavittsville-Adara | Kilbuck | Plum | Whitaker |
| Chalfant | McCandless | Rankin | Whitehall |
| Churchill | McDonald | Reserve | Wilkins |
| City of Pittsburgh | McKees Rocks | Robinson | Wilkesburg |
| Collier | Millvale | Ross | Wilmerding |
| Crafton | Monroeville | Roslyn Farms | |

Service Solutions

A Handy Reference for Addressing Sewage Related Questions and Concerns

- **ALCOSAN Billing**
For questions regarding the ALCOSAN portion of your sewage bill, please contact ALCOSAN Customer Service at (412) 766-6696.
- **Municipal Billing**
For questions regarding the municipal portion of your sewage bill, please contact your municipality or the municipal billing service provider.
- **Home Sewer Back-ups Blocked Drains/Downspouts**
For questions regarding home sewer backups or blocked drains and downspouts, please contact a licensed private plumbing contractor.
- **Household Hazardous Waste**
For questions regarding the disposal of hazardous products from the home, please contact the Southwestern Pennsylvania Household Hazardous Waste Task Force (www.swpahhw.com) at (412) 488-7452, or the Allegheny County Health Dept. Recycling Division at (412) 578-8319.
- **Garbage / Non-Hazardous Household Waste**
To report garbage that has not been collected or for questions regarding bulk trash pickup in your community, please contact your municipality or municipal waste hauler.
- **Storm / Sanitary Sewer Overflows**
To report sewage overflows at an ALCOSAN structure located along rivers and creeks, please call 1-888-936-9363. To report sewage overflows at a municipal structure, please contact the municipality in which the overflow is being observed.
- **ALCOSAN Odor Line**
To report odors in the vicinity of ALCOSAN's treatment plant, please call the Odor Hotline at (412) 766-9445.

Understanding How Sewage Service Is Billed

Your water company and ALCOSAN are two distinctly separate companies, each with its own functions and responsibilities. Your water company is responsible for the treatment, delivery and billing of drinking water. ALCOSAN is responsible for the treatment, disposal and billing of wastewater.

ALCOSAN's charges are based on the amount of water a customer uses during a quarterly billing period. Water usage information, whether usage is based on meter readings or a flat rate, is provided by the water company.

Because your sewage bill is based upon water usage, your bill may vary each quarter. Factors which impact both the water and wastewater portions of your bill are:

- Seasonal conditions
- Changes in the number of occupants in your home
- Water conservation
- Leaking pipes and fixtures

Most customers are billed either by their municipality or by a municipality-contracted third party billing service such as a tax collector or water service provider. Service billed by 78 of ALCOSAN's 83 communities includes a surcharge established and managed by that municipality with funds earmarked for community sewer maintenance and repair. The five communities billed directly by ALCOSAN are Aspinwall, Ben Avon, Ben Avon Heights, Thornburg and Verona. Residents of the other communities are billed by the municipality's billing service provider.

As of January 2008, ALCOSAN's treatment charge is \$3.25 per 1,000 gallons of water used. In addition, the Authority charges a quarterly customer service charge of \$6.83. A customer using 18,000 gallons a quarter will pay \$65.33 in ALCOSAN charges.

Commercial and industrial customers in the ALCOSAN service area that have higher strength waste discharges receive a surcharge issued by ALCOSAN based on the concentration of the discharge. ALCOSAN Industrial Waste Department personnel will take a sample for laboratory analysis with the surcharge calculated utilizing a formula based on the test results.



New Sewer Overflow Notification Programs Initiated

ALCOSAN has instituted two new notification programs for the 2008 recreational boating season to enhance public awareness when sewer overflows affect the water quality and recreational use of area waterways.

SEWER OVERFLOW ADVISORY KEY (SOAK)

During wet weather, conditions on our rivers, streams and creeks change, making them unsuitable for many activities. In addition to the hazards of debris that is washed from the land and fast moving water, sewers can overflow where they connect to the ALCOSAN system. These overflows can be the source of bacteria that may be harmful if swallowed or if exposed to an open wound. These SOAK advisories alert the public when the ALCOSAN system may be impacting area waterways.

| GREEN | SYSTEM IN DRY WEATHER OPERATION: USE RIVERS, STREAMS AND CREEKS WITH CARE | | |
|-----------|--|--|----------------|
| | Contact | Activity | Recommendation |
| | Primary | Jet Skiing Wakeboarding Water Skiing Swimming Wading | Suitable |
| Secondary | Canoeing Sculling/Rowing Power Boating Kayaking Fishing | Suitable | |

| YELLOW | WET WEATHER OVERFLOWS HAVE CEASED: RIVERS, STREAMS AND CREEKS MAY STILL BE IMPAIRED | | |
|-----------|--|--|---------------------|
| | Contact | Activity | Recommendation |
| | Primary | Jet Skiing Wakeboarding Water Skiing Swimming Wading | May not be suitable |
| Secondary | Canoeing Sculling/Rowing Power Boating Kayaking Fishing | Suitable | |

| RED | WET WEATHER OVERFLOWS ARE IN EFFECT: AVOID CONTACT WITH RIVERS, STREAMS AND CREEKS | | |
|-----------|---|--|----------------|
| | Contact | Activity | Recommendation |
| | Primary | Jet Skiing Wakeboarding Water Skiing Swimming Wading | Not suitable |
| Secondary | Canoeing Sculling/Rowing Power Boating Kayaking Fishing | May not be suitable** | |

**Recreation may not be suitable due to high flows, floating debris, poor visibility during storms, and commercial traffic. Extreme caution should be used during this period.

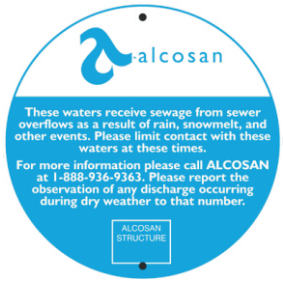
The first of these new initiatives is the ongoing installation of signs at each of the Authority's 259 combined sewer overflow structures and 53 sanitary sewer overflow structures. These signs will alert the public about the potential for overflows at particular structures.

The second new initiative is the color-coded Sewer Overflow Advisory Key (SOAK), a web-based indicator of current waterway conditions and activity recommendations based on the most recently reported overflow information. SOAK notifications will reflect the date and time of the most recent change in waterway conditions and will alert users of how various recreational activities may be affected by sewer overflows.

Each of these new notification methods serves as a compliment to the orange CSO flags flown at area marinas, locks and dams, and wastewater treatment facilities. The flags are raised for combined sewer overflows during the recreational boating season, May 15 through September 30. During a CSO alert, people are cautioned to minimize water contact on river outings and to avoid contact with stream water. Those with weakened immune systems and open cuts or sores are especially vulnerable to infection from exposure to these contaminated waters.

The flag program is administered by the Allegheny County Health Department. You can visit www.achd.net or call the Health Department's 24-hour River Water Advisory hotline at (412) 687-ACHD to find out if an alert has been issued.

To access the SOAK program and other advisories, visit www.alcosan.org and click on the Sewer Overflow Advisories link.



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(412) 766-4810



Frankie The Fish says, "Get hooked on protecting your watershed!"

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Winter 2009

The Director's Connector

A Quarterly Message from
ALCOSAN's Directors



Welcome to the second issue of the Overflow Monitor. This issue expands upon basic information about ALCOSAN and wet weather topics by outlining the consent decree and the steps ALCOSAN is taking to address sewage overflow issues in each of seven regional planning basins (see Page 2).

It is important to note two items regarding the consent decree. First, ALCOSAN takes the responsibility of regulatory compliance very seriously. To that end, a proactive stance was taken by planning and initiating projects years before the consent decree was finalized. This 'head start' approach saved valuable time and money that would have translated into higher rate increases.

Second, you have the opportunity to become an informed participant in this program. Become familiar with the consent decree by reviewing it online at www.alcosan.org or by contacting our Public Relations Department for a copy. Also, consider attending one of several meetings planned for mid-January which will highlight the wet weather program's progress and future endeavors.

Arthur Tamilia, Esq.
Dir. of Environmental Compliance
Deputy Executive Director



It typically takes 9 to 12 hours for wastewater to pass through ALCOSAN's treatment process.

ALCOSAN 101:

The Basics of Wastewater Treatment

Every day as much as 240 million gallons of wastewater can be processed at the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority's treatment facility on Pittsburgh's North Side. This treatment removes pollutants from wastewater that were once discharged directly into our rivers and streams.

Basic wastewater treatment consists of four stages: preliminary treatment, primary treatment, secondary treatment and disinfection. The components of each stage combine to clarify the water to a degree acceptable for discharge into a receiving tributary which, in ALCOSAN's case, is the Ohio River.

The process begins with wastewater from homes, businesses and industries traveling

through municipal sewer systems to interceptors which convey the untreated water to the plant. An 11-story, 40-foot diameter wet well receives all the wastewater that will be treated within the plant. During normal plant operation, the wet well holds approximately 582,800 gallons of untreated wastewater.

Drawn through six main sewage pumps to a high point in the pump station, wastewater then flows by gravity through the remainder of the treatment process. Bar screens remove larger debris while inorganic material such as cinders, sand and small stones settle out in grit chambers. Debris removed at these two points is collected and hauled to landfills for disposal. In the primary sedimentation

tanks, the flow is slowed significantly, allowing minute particles which remain suspended in the wastewater to settle and collect at the bottom of the tanks. These biosolids are then pumped to the dewatering facility for disposal. At the same time, floating debris including scum and grease are cleared from the top of the sedimentation tanks through a chain-driven system of moving paddles, or flights, and are also pumped to the dewatering facility for disposal.

In secondary treatment, wastewater flows into aeration tanks where it is brought into contact with natural microorganisms, called activated sludge.

See *Basics*, Page 2



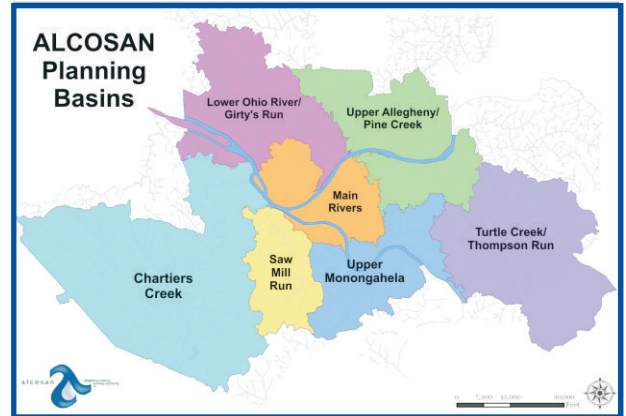
FLOW FACT: At 616' above sea level, the pump floor of ALCOSAN's Main Pump Station is reportedly the lowest accessible point in Allegheny County.

Basin Groups Formed for Wet Weather Planning

The major component of ALCOSAN's Consent Decree is the development of a Wet Weather Plan (WWP). The plan must propose technical alternatives to eliminate Sanitary Sewer Overflows (SSOs), control Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs) to meet water quality standards, and provide conveyance and treatment capacity for municipal flows within the Regional Collection System.

ALCOSAN's service area spans approximately 310 square miles and is comprised of 83 municipalities including the City of Pittsburgh. Seven regional planning basin groups have been formed to study and evaluate the needs of the communities in the service area. ALCOSAN has contracted the services of local and national firms to provide the basin planning. The basin planners perform tasks such as GIS mapping, water quality impact assessments, precipitation and flow monitoring, hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, relief sewer routing and sizing alternatives, cost analyses, coordinating regulatory and public information, meeting with municipal officials, and more.

Techniques used to perform tasks and analyses are uniform across all basins and basin coordinators consult with a contracted program manager to ensure consistency and accurate reporting. In addition, ongoing meetings are held with ALCOSAN, municipal and public officials, engineers, and other vested stakeholders to discuss findings, regional issues, and options that will enable the development of an integrated, cost-effective, long-term regional Wet Weather Plan. The WWP must be submitted to the regulatory agencies by September 30, 2012. The findings will also be useful to the municipalities who each must develop an ACT 537 Sewage Facilities Plan.



Beginning in January of 2009, a series of public forums will be scheduled to explain wet weather issues, current conditions, the planning process, the status of the basin plans and regional integration, and also to solicit feedback. These forums will be held in various locations within the ALCOSAN service area and will be accessible by public transportation. Further details will be posted to the ALCOSAN web site (www.alcosan.org) as they become available. In addition, printed copies of key documents will be provided to local libraries, municipal centers and other public access points for public review.

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VOLUME 1, NUMBER 2

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The Overflow Monitor is printed on FSC Certified recycled paper

Basics (cont'd)

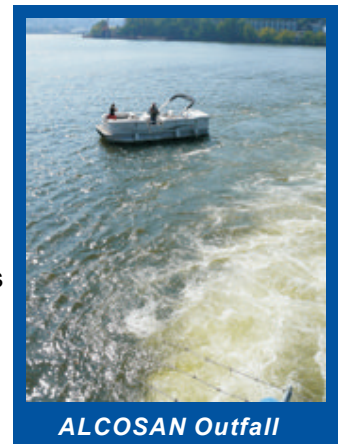
These micro-organisms break down remaining organic matter and nutrients into harmless by-products. Compressed air is pumped through tiny diffusers to aerate the tanks and maintain a healthy colony of microorganisms.

After aeration, the remaining "mixed liquor" flows to the secondary clarifiers where the activated sludge is settled out and either returned to the aeration tanks or pumped to the dewatering facility for disposal.

In the disinfection stage, treated wastewater passes from the clarifiers to chlorine contact tanks where a potent sodium hypochlorite (bleach) solution is introduced for disinfection. The disinfected "final" effluent is then discharged to the Ohio River. By the end of 2008, treated wastewater will go through the additional process of dechlorination, which uses sodium bisulfite to neutralize chlorine by-products present in the effluent prior to discharge

Residual materials from this entire treatment process -- both primary and secondary solids -- are conditioned with a polymer and fed through centrifuges in the dewatering facility. In these units, high speed rotation creates centrifugal force, similar to the action of the spin cycle on a washing machine. This force separates the solids from the liquids to create a dry sludge "cake." ALCOSAN's centrifuges process approximately 44,000 dry tons of sludge per year, approximately 32% of which is incinerated in the plant's energy recovery facility.

The remaining sludge is sent to the lime loading facility where pebble lime is added to increase pH and reduce pathogens to a level suitable for soil application. ALCOSAN's limed sludge, known as ALCOSOIL, is used for land reclamation and as a fertilizer for agricultural feed crops in both Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio.



What is a Consent Decree?

When the federal Clean Water Act was amended by Congress back in 1988 prohibiting sanitary sewer overflows and reducing combined sewer overflows, it forced wastewater treatment plants across the United States to enter into consent orders with the federal government through the Environmental Protection Agency. In the case of ALCOSAN, the Consent Decree is an agreement between the Allegheny County Sanitary Authority (ALCOSAN) and the EPA, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) for ALCOSAN to achieve compliance with the Clean Water Act during periods of wet weather.



Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO)

The Consent Decree is a binding, legal document that is certified by a federal judge and therefore recognized by the court. After seven years of negotiations, a final agreement was reached between ALCOSAN and the regulatory agencies and filed with the U.S. Department of Justice in May 2007. The document was officially entered into court on January 23, 2008 which started the time line to compliance. ALCOSAN was charged with a civil penalty of \$1.2 million for all past violations with equal portions allocated to the US Environmental Protection Agency, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and the Allegheny County Health Department.

The 256-page document outlines requirements for ALCOSAN to meet in order to reach compliance. The requirements must follow a precise time line or result in additional stipulated penalties. Some of the major requirements included are the elimination of all sanitary sewer overflows, elimination of dry weather discharges, regulation of combined sewer discharges to meet compliance requirements, construction and operation of conveyance, storage & treatment facilities to accommodate additional flow, development and implementation of a Wet Weather Plan, development of partnerships with service municipalities and expansion of public outreach efforts.

The municipal collection system is not part of the consent decree, but, municipalities are required to comply with consent orders or agreements that have been issued directly to them from the regulating agencies. It is, however, imperative that ALCOSAN and the municipalities work together to meet joint compliance.

To view or download a copy of the consent decree, visit www.alcosan.org.

ALCOSAN Debuts Improved Web Site

ALCOSAN debuted a new look and navigation to its web site earlier this month as part of a three phase project.

The new site (www.alcosan.org) features an environmental look, a progressive, user-friendly design with enhanced navigation and up-to-date information about ALCOSAN operations and consent decree issues. The second and third phases, to be completed in 2009, will expand the site's framework through the use of interactive features, real-time event and notification calendars and the inclusion of multimedia resources.

"The scope and potential of the internet has expanded greatly since ALCOSAN debuted its web site back in 2002," said ALCOSAN Executive Director Arletta Scott Williams. "The lodging of the consent decree and the expanding public notification requirements that resulted provided an ideal staging platform for the facelift of the public site," she said.



Design consultants from the Pipitone Group offered a sneak public preview of the new web site during ALCOSAN's Open House, giving visitors an opportunity to explore and comment on the site's new appearance and features. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive in terms of both design and content.

Record-Breaking Open House



ALCOSAN welcomed a record crowd of nearly 2,000 visitors to learn about wastewater treatment, watersheds and sewer overflows during its annual Open House on Saturday, September 20.



With expanded exhibits and hands-on activities including plant tours and an interactive walk-through of the sewer overflow issue, the event offered educational opportunities for visitors of all ages.



Teachers participated in a professional development workshop with an opportunity to fulfill continuing education requirements. In addition, many students from within the ALCOSAN service area took advantage of extra credit opportunities by participating in activities such as the Mad Scientist presentation, where the biological treatment process was examined through microscopes.



Mark your calendars for ALCOSAN's next Open House on Saturday, September 19, 2009

Safe Storage & Disposal of Seasonal Chemicals

With the winter chill now upon us, it is a great time to reconsider your off-season storage of those extra bottles of chemicals used to keep summer weeds and bugs in check.

When storing pesticides and other chemicals, consult the label for proper storage requirements. Check to be sure lids are secure and place the materials in a dry, well-ventilated area, away from extreme heat or freezing temperatures. The storage area must be dry as dampness reduces the shelf life of chemicals and may cause containers to decompose and leak. Extreme heat may cause ineffectiveness and freezing may cause containers to break and leak. The area also must be safe from flooding and able to contain any accidental spills.

After you have properly stored or disposed of last year's chemicals, consider taking another route this spring. Use natural products to keep your lawn in check. Pesticides are poisons. Everything you put on your lawn affects the environment. Pesticide residue remains on the lawn even after it dries thereby contributing to pollutants in the runoff after a rain. Consider the amount of chemicals sprayed on your lawn and how much time you spend sitting outside enjoying the thick lawn under your feet.

This year, discuss with other gardeners or landscapers alternative and natural ways to care for your lawn. These changes may aid in making your home a safer place for children and pets that are especially sensitive to the harsh chemicals.



Resources for information regarding the proper disposal of chemicals include the Southwestern Pennsylvania Household Hazardous Waste Task Force and Pennsylvania Resources Council. These groups sponsor drop-off events to aid homeowners in the proper disposal of harmful pesticides and other hazardous wastes. Visit www.swpahhw.org or www.prc.org to learn more about scheduled events in this area.



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! Learn more about ALCOSAN's wet weather program and planning process by attending one of several regional meetings in January and February 2009. Meeting information is posted at www.alcosan.org.