

A New Era in Resource Recovery

Millions in savings and environmental benefits as well

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 25, 2015

(Green Bay, WI) Groundbreaking took place this morning for NEW Water's new solids handling facility, a project known as Resource Recovery and Electrical Energy, or R2E2. This new facility will allow NEW Water, the brand of the Green Bay Metropolitan Sewerage District, to move past simply treating the waste water it receives and, instead, turn it into a valuable resource that will be recovered. Among those participating in the groundbreaking ceremony: U.S. Congressman Reid Ribble, Brown County Executive Troy Streckenbach, Green Bay Mayor Jim Schmitt, NEW Water Commission Secretary Jim Blumreich, and NEW Water Executive Director Tom Sigmund.

The new facility will replace the existing solids handling facility in order to meet stricter environmental regulations, address the need for increased capacity and replace aging infrastructure. "In addition, the project harnesses the recovery of both nutrients and methane gas; resulting in cost savings and environmental benefits," said NEW Water Executive Director Tom Sigmund.

The design, selected with the support of a stakeholder advisory committee, involves building two anaerobic digesters which will break down biodegradable material in the absence of oxygen, and reduce the volume of material to be processed. The digesters will produce a methane gas, which will be captured and used to produce electricity. Additional benefits include:

- The new process will be able to accept different types of wastes directly, such as dairy, sugar, and food processing waste, which NEW Water cannot do today, and would otherwise be spread onto nearby fields or landfilled.
- By accepting different wastes, digester energy production can be increased by 50 percent or more; providing a consistent and environmentally-friendly disposal outlet.
- It is estimated that NEW Water's energy costs will be reduced by 50 percent in the first year of operation, resulting in an estimated savings of more than \$2 million per year.

"Plus there will be a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions of about 22,000 metric tons per year," explained Sigmund. "That's the equivalent of removing about 15,000 vehicles from the road."

R2E2 will also feature a nutrient recovery process that will create a fertilizer for commercial sale. Approximately 1,000 tons per year of a slow-release phosphorus-rich fertilizer will be recovered; representing about \$400,000 of revenue.

(more)

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R2E2 Project – page 2

“We are tremendously excited about this new facility,” added Sigmund. “It will allow NEW Water to continue to provide safe, reliable, around the clock treatment services our customers have come to expect.”

The cost of the R2E2 Project is estimated at \$169 million. The average household in NEW Water’s service area will pay about \$1.60 more per month for services in 2016 compared to 2015. As NEW Water is a wholesale provider of wastewater services to 18 municipalities, municipalities pass additional costs for their own operations, maintenance and other costs for their portion of the wastewater collection system on to their customers, along with charges from NEW Water.

Completion date for the R2E2 project is slated by late summer/early fall 2018.

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