

HOW TO SPEAK

IN ORDER TO GET THE RESULTS YOU NEED

PERCEPTION VS. REALITY

HOW WE ARE PERCEIVED



HOW WE ACTUALLY ARE



GOVERNING BODIES

- Elected officials: People that have just enough knowledge about local issues and plenty of charisma to earn your vote. (Mayor and council members)
 - Generally has no idea about wastewater treatment.
- Appointed officials: Individuals that are appointed by their city or special service district to be upon a board of directors.
 - Should have a little more knowledge about your facility, but don't count on it!

STAKEHOLDERS

- Legal Counsel: Member of the Bar Association employed by the governing body to oversee legal matters.
 - Knows the law but doesn't know crap about crap, nor pretreatment.
- Other Stake Holders: Business Owners, Home Owners, Residents, Trophy Spouses, etc.
 - Knows water should go down the drain.

MULTIPLE DECISIONS

- Governing bodies have many decisions to make:
 - Funding and revenue streams
 - Prioritization of projects
 - High visibility projects
 - Community Impact Events
 - Low visibility projects
 - Utility Projects
 - New business inquiries, subdivisions, annexations

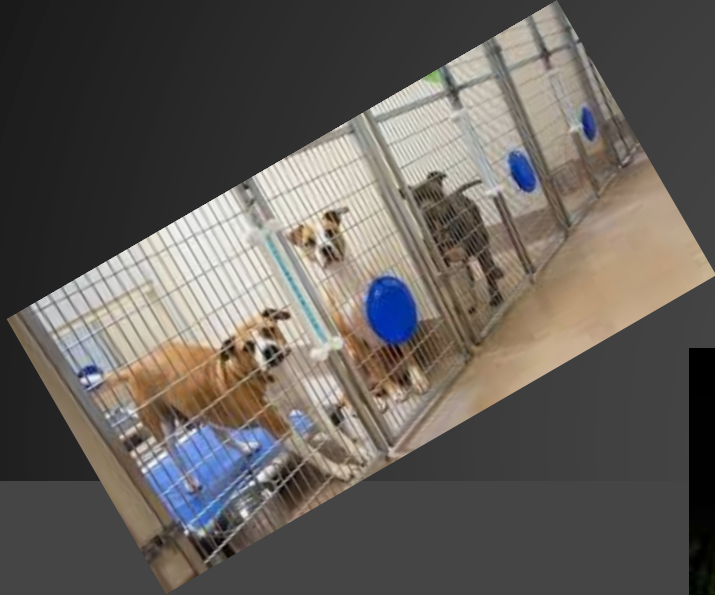
HIGH VISIBILITY



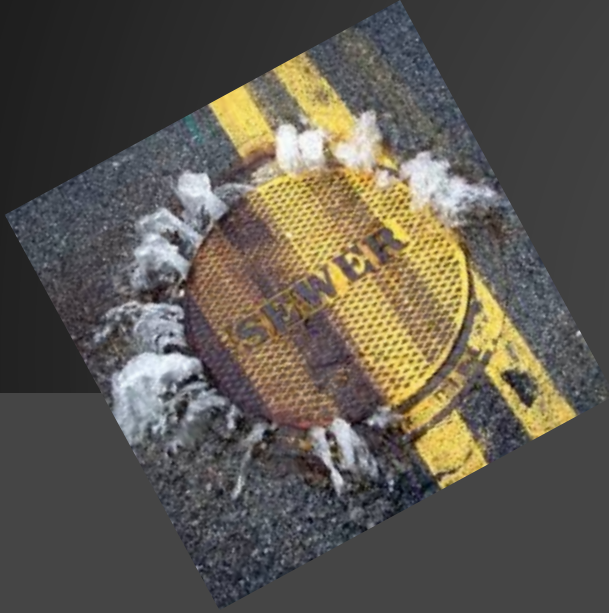
COMMUNITY IMPACT EVENTS



LOW VISIBILITY



UTILITY PROJECTS



ISSUE AVOIDANCE



Identifying environmental
Minneapolis green zones
Doing something about
matter.

is: Everything You Need to Know
t's water was making people sick,
ation crisis unfolded—and what we can

Winona city council reviews wastewater
ordinances, future city hall plans



"I CALLED THE MAYOR AND THE CITY COUNCIL ABOUT THE ODORS... BUT NOONE WAS IN!"

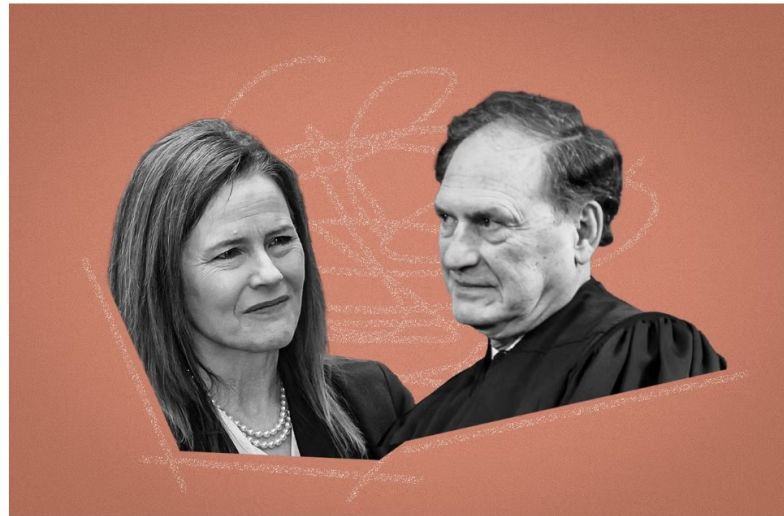
WHAT TO DO?

- Educate your governing body!
 - Meet individually with the members of your governing body;
 - Go to their office or meet them for coffee;
 - Do not meet with more than one at a time, otherwise it is considered a public meeting;
 - Remember a quorum means a minor majority of the governing body meeting together.
 - Discuss the issue you are wanting their help with and earn their trust!
 - This may take some time.

UPCOMING DISCUSSIONS

Supreme Court Rules the Clean Water Act Doesn't Actually Require That Water Be Clean

BY MARK JOSEPH STERN MARCH 04, 2025 • 2:13 PM



WHAT WAS CONTESTED?

- In 2019, a new permit was issued to the Oceanside Facility of San Francisco.
 - It contained two new end-result requirements;
 - The first prohibits the facility from making any discharge that “contribute[s] to a violation of any applicable water quality standard” for receiving waters.
 - The second provides that the City cannot perform any treatment or make any discharge that “create[s] pollution, contamination, or nuisance as defined by California Water Code section 13050”.

SAN FRANCISCO VS. THE EPA

- The city of San Francisco filed a lawsuit claiming that the narrative prohibitions in their permit were too vague.
 - Relied on receiving water standards rather than effluent standards.
 - Prohibitions were too vague to provide proper notice of what was considered a violation.
- WHICH MEANS...

U.S. SUPREME COURT

- In a 5-4 ruling earlier this year, the court determined the EPA cannot impose “end result” provisions in permits that regulate water pollution.
 - San Francisco argued the EPA’s ban on any discharge that contributes to “a violation of any applicable water quality standard” for receiving water was unlawful under the Clean Water Act.

The city said the law allows the EPA to impose specific limits on pollutants but not to hold permit holders responsible for overall quality of the water that receives the discharge.

By Rachel McDevitt | StateImpact Pennsylvania

PFAS/PFOA CONTAMINATION



CONTAMINATION CONCERNS

- Biosolids
 - Farmer v. Synagro Tech., Inc., No. C-03-CV-24-000598 (Baltimore Cty. Cir. Ct. Feb. 27, 2024)
- PFAS Strategic Roadmap
 - “Leverage National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permitting to reduce PFAS discharges to waterways to reduce discharges of PFAS at the source and obtain more comprehensive information through monitoring on the sources of PFAS and quantity of PFAS discharged by these sources.”

PFAS... WHAT NOW?

- Be prepared to discuss what Pretreatment needs are going to be.
 - The need for more funding to sample IUs for PFAS.
 - The possible need to answer questions about effluent and biosolids contamination.
- Be prepared to discuss any other questions they may have...
 - The questions may catch you off guard.

WHY DISCUSS THESE THINGS?

- You are the individual hired by your utility to interpret the regulations set forth by the EPA.
- You are also the number one (1) authority about pretreatment issues for your utility.
- No one knows more about your program than you do!
 - I don't care what anyone else claims! You are the top authority so act like it!
 - Do not allow your governing body to deter your decisions; however...

BE CONFIDENT

- Confidence is backed by knowledge.
 - Know what you are proposing and the reasoning behind the decision.
 - Do not be meek!
 - Speak about the subject and do not offer anything outside of what you are trying to discuss.
- Answer the governing body's questions
 - Answer directly and do not provide more information than is necessary.
 - Be aware, some of the questions may be off the wall.

BE PREPARED!

- It's not Just a Boy Scout motto!
- Try to anticipate anything and everything you may be asked.
- If you have a PowerPoint presentation, rehearse it a few times prior to actually presenting.
- Be aware that just because you are on the agenda doesn't mean you will present at that time.
 - This can happen during the City Council Workshop or the Council Meeting.

STAY PROFESSIONAL

- Try not to get flustered!
 - The lack of consideration for your time can be frustrating.
 - The strangest questions can cause you to become frustrated.
 - Political pressure being applied can be daunting.
 - Public speaking can be overwhelming.

REMEMBER!

It's okay to say, "I don't
know! But I will find out and
get back to you."

WHEN CAUGHT OFF GUARD...

- Avoid personal attacks or emotional outbursts. Instead, use these phrases:
 - “Can you help me understand how you arrived at that conclusion?”
 - “Would you mind if we circle back on this? I want to make sure to give this the attention it deserves.”
 - “Would you mind walking me through your thought process?”
 - “You are entitled to a different perspective.”
- And if those don’t work, just say...
 - “I admire your commitment to being completely clueless.”, or

There are 171,476 words in the English
dictionary but none describe how
much I wish to hit you with a chair.

SCENARIO #1

- Attended the City Council Workshop to get the City to adopt the changes made to our Pretreatment Rules and Regulations.
 - Former City Manager presented on the Landfill updates took 45 minutes.
 - WWTP Engineer took the last 15 minutes to discuss funding needs.
 - Did not speak to the City Council, was rescheduled for the next meeting.
- Attended City Council Workshop again.
 - City Council was more concerned about a mural that offended some residents,
 - Did not speak to the city council again, because of poor meeting management.
- Third time was the charm, but only received ten minutes to get my points across.

SCENARIO #2

- Speaking to another City Council and a Council Member asks:
 - What happens if we don't accept your recommendations?
 - Why do we need to have a certified wastewater operator for our facility? Our current staff is managing just fine.
 - Why would we need staff members at the facility every day, everything is automated isn't it?

SCENARIO #3

- A prospective business went to the City Council about our program requirements.
 - Business owner knows a Council Member and the Mayor personally.
 - Wants to forgo the requirement for a gravity grease interceptor.
 - The council member actually stated; “I know Joe Businessman personally and if they say they won’t need this apparatus then I believe them.”
- The Mayor allowed the Business Owner to plead his case and then said “Unfortunately, we are only member of the POTW and you must comply with their regulations.”

CONCLUSION

- You were hired for the job because you have the tools to do it!
- Be confident in yourself and in your research.
- Earn your governing bodies trust and confidence.
- Don't be afraid of conflict and having a difference of opinion with those in a position of authority.
- It is okay to say "I don't know. Can I get back to you with that information?"
- Build your peer network so that you can call someone for a second opinion.

QUESTIONS/CONCERNS



CONTACT INFO

- Spencer Parkinson
 - Desk- (801) 495-5452
 - Work Cell- (801) 859-8307
 - Personal Cell- (801) 244-3901
 - Email- sparkinson@svwater.com
 - Email- Spencer@rwau.net

