Legislative Water Commission Summary of Wastewater Issues, Solutions and Priorities

(as modified on 11/21/17)

What municipal wastewater problems need solving?

#1 ***Find solutions to fund aging wastewater infrastructure upgrades and control rising costs.***

Key: issues ranked highest at the October meeting
parked solutions raised at the October meeting
= "dot-mocracy" rank from the November meeting
* = top 8 priorities

SHORT TERM OPTIONS (meet immediate needs)

compliance tools (tech assistance, variances, compliance schedules, fee waivers, optimization, with equity for businesses)

develop statewide prescription drug takeback program	5	

operation and maintenance (cost increases with technical complexity, I/I, flusahble wipes)

provide I/I funding for public and private lines	10	*
facility optimization (LCCMR pilot project proposed)	1	
fund research to improve operations	0	
change flushable labels on personal care wipes	8	*
educate consumers (drug disposal, wipes disposal, softener operations/salt use); watershed-wide P2 education	1	
identify opportunities for regional cooperation for administration and O & M	9	*
industrial pretreatment/source reduction	4	

skilled workforce (recruitment incentives, competetive salary, ongoing training, pooled staff); *tied to O & M*

develop operator workforce, researchers, and industry leaders	3	
create pool of O & M expertise	1	
create student loan forgiveness program	0	
change licensing requirements to allow for contracted/shared private sector services	0	

funding (unsewered communities, towns under 1000, towns over 1000)

balanced PFA loan/grant funding	4	
continue/increase PFA loan/grant funding (@ lest $121M/biennium)	8	*
build USTDA best value procurement recs into grant/loan processes	0	
change funding criteria - *tied to O & M*	0	
support asset management and long-term/capital planning using life cycle costs	1	
find a new funding source (such as the Chesapeake Bay model)	8	*
develop public-private partnerships	0	
promote use of design-build options	0	
waive the prevailing wage in rural communities	5	
holding tanks for unsewered communities eligible for funding	3	

permitting (appropriateness of stds, C:B assessments, peer review, cumulative effects, individual vs watershed approach)

institutionalize guidance/commissioner memos into statute (peer review, variance fee waivers, etc.)	0	
identify opportunities for regionalization of facilities	4	
monitor federal actions	0	

MID TERM OPTIONS (foundation already in place)

availability of trading processes/partners (PS and/or NPS)

allow for credit swaps	4	
pilot a watershed-scale program (follow Oregon model?) and involve ag in the planning	17	*

permitting (appropriateness of stds, C:B assessments, peer review, cumulative effects, individual vs watershed approach)

independent, quantified cost-benefits analysis & peer review of standards	19	*
develop better estimates of regulator costs	2	
develop guidance on C:B rations for PS vs NPS treatment shares	0	
set thresholds for cost of upgrades	1	
collective effect of permits on water quality at regional/watershed scale	1	
create appropriate and predictable standards consistent with border states	1	
streamline the regulatory process	7	&

LONG TERM OPTIONS

integrated water management planning (avoid shifting the burden from wastewater to water supply); reuse

write a MN 5-15 year integrated water plan with overarching principles (e.g., collaboration, meet local values)	5
financial incentives for resource recovery (energy, nutrients, water)	1
create centers of excellence for integrated water management across the state	3
educate consumers (conservation, reuse)	0

affordability/availability of technologies (existing, emerging, innovated, combined, hybrid, diverse)

base decisions on technical expertise	0
research to spawn innovative technologies (better, cheaper, address CECs…)	1