

TO: Municipal Environmental Group – Wastewater Division

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DATE: January 14, 2026

2024 YEAR-IN-REVIEW

2025 has been quite a year! MEG Wastewater was very busy on both the legislative and regulatory fronts. Before the Legislature, we successfully lobbied for increased funding through the Clean Water Fund and Safe Drinking Water Loan Programs and testified on bills regarding municipal utility exemptions for PFAS liability and funding for PFAS work through a municipal grant program. We also actively participated in development of new rules for facility planning through the Department of Natural Resources' facility planning advisory group. And of course, we continued our work on PFAS issues, including working with DNR regarding the agency's approach to biosolids monitoring for PFAS compounds, as well as following regulatory developments at the federal level.

We also continued to be active in member services in 2025. Throughout the year, we provided permit review services to 33 MEG member communities. These permit reviews included providing comments on implementation of monitoring requirements for PFAS compounds in effluent and biosolids, E.coli and disinfection requirements, and variances, among other issues. We have also continued to update our website with any new information we have found pertinent to wastewater regulation.

As always, your membership and involvement in MEG has helped us to continue to play a significant role in developing Wisconsin wastewater policy. This memo is a summary of some of the most significant issues in which we were involved in 2025.

SERVING MEMBERS

1. Steering Committee Participation.

We once again experienced good participation at our MEG Steering Committee meetings from our 108 member communities across the state. In 2025, we continued the new plan of holding Steering Committee meetings in person (with virtual options) at different member facilities across the state. These meetings were accompanied by facility tours, which we plan to continue into 2026. We greatly appreciate the work of our members in hosting our Steering Committee meetings and arranging facility tours, which has enabled our continued meeting success.

2. Newsletters and Website information

We also continued to provide members with monthly updates on current issues in wastewater law and policy through our Informational Bulletins and Regulatory Updates. In 2025, we have tried to make our monthly newsletters more user friendly, but we continue to appreciate your feedback on the newsletters so that we can make them as useful as possible for our membership. We are also continuing to add to our website, including updates on PFAS, our comments on proposed DNR rule packages and guidance documents, and factsheets to assist members with recent legal developments.

3. Permit Reviews

We also continued to provide more personalized service to individual communities through our member services, particularly through our permit review service. In 2025, we provided free reviews for 33 MEG members of draft WPDES permits to evaluate whether the proposed permit changes were consistent with other permits and complied with applicable code requirements. These permit reviews are particularly important now that the new PFAS surface water rules are in effect and DNR is implementing biosolids monitoring for PFAS in permits. The knowledge that we gain from these reviews helps us to know what issues to address with the DNR and the Legislature. We hope it provides a valuable service to our members as well.

SHAPING PUBLIC POLICY

1. MEG HELPED SECURE INCREASE IN CWF PROGRAM REVENUE BONDING AUTHORITY.

In 2025, we teamed up with members of MEG Water, the League of Wisconsin Municipalities, Wisconsin Rural Water Association, Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District, Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, and NEW Water to lobby for an increase in revenue bonding authority for the Clean Water Fund and Safe Drinking Water Loan Programs. This increase in revenue bonding authority was necessary to ensure that there would be sufficient funds available over the next biennium for important wastewater and water utility infrastructure projects. Through our extensive team lobbying efforts over the first half of 2025, we were successful in getting the Legislature to fund both programs at our requested funding level. This was a *significant* success, and we greatly appreciate all the time and effort of our membership in helping to secure this legislative victory.

2. MEG HELPED GUIDE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW FACILITY PLANNING RULES.

On behalf of MEG, we actively participated in the new advisory group for updates to NR 108 and 110 relating to wastewater utility facility planning. This is a significant rule update effort, as these rules have not been updated in decades and are in many ways out of touch with current facility planning practice. This advisory group met monthly from the summer through the fall of 2025 and will meet again in 2026. Our work on this advisory group included advocating for a more streamlined process for facility planning, exemptions for certain types of projects, and clarifications regarding conflict between code language and requirements in practice. We hope that our participation will benefit our membership by creating a more utility-friendly facility planning system.

3. MEG CONTINUED TO PLAY A PIVOTAL ROLE IN SHAPING PFAS LAW AND POLICY.

A. MEG continued to be active in development of PFAS policy statewide.

Polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) are a group of chemicals that emerged as contaminants of concern in 2019 and continued to be a focal point of our work through 2025, particularly at the regulatory level. We continued to sit on numerous PFAS advisory committees through 2025, including DNR's Technical and External Advisory Committees, as well as subgroups on wastewater and waste. On the national level, we

continued to participate on behalf of MEG in a national PFAS receivers group, which has helped us to keep abreast of PFAS initiatives in other states and at the federal level.

B. MEG continued to lobby on PFAS-related bills before the legislature.

MEG also continued its lobbying support for two PFAS bills. One bill provides certain exemptions from the state spills statute for municipal utilities who land applied biosolids that contain PFAS in accordance with applicable permits, and the other bill establishes, among other items, a municipal grant program that includes funding for municipal wastewater utility work on PFAS. Both of these bills would provide significant benefits to wastewater utilities. We will continue to lobby for both bills in 2026 and are very hopeful that our lobbying efforts will secure passage of these bills in 2026.