

Back River WWTP Treated Effluent & Water Service Bill

Background

Since the 1940s, there has been a relationship between Baltimore City's Back River wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and Sparrows Point. Historically, treated effluent from the WWTP was used to help cool the mill's machinery before flowing into two outfalls, located at the southeastern and southwestern corners of the 3,100-acre property. As a result, Back River WWTP has two State-issued discharge permits that require the treated effluent to be discharged to two locations: Back River and Sparrows Point. Although the mill has ceased operations, the relationship with Baltimore City and the Back River WWTP continues to exist today, as the conditions and limits contained in the City's discharge permits require discharging a portion of the treated effluent through Sparrows Point to be in compliance.



How it Works

Baltimore City's Department of Public Works Back River WWTP supplies roughly 38 million gallons of treated effluent to Sparrows Point through two 60" and 96" lines that travel five miles south of the plant to a discharge point called High Head Pond, located on the Sparrows Point Property just north of 695. There are two pumping stations at the pond that pump the treated effluent into two 60" distribution lines that run along the western and eastern perimeters of the property. These lines discharge into two permitted outfalls, which are monitored and sampled daily to ensure compliance with MDE & EPA guidelines. Reports are filed monthly with MDE & EPA.

Going Forward

Sparrows Point Terminal, LLC, the new owners of Sparrows Point, are currently operating the pumping stations at High Head Pond under a 3 year agreement with the City that was reached shortly after Sparrows Point Terminal, LLC purchased the property. The 3-year agreement helped settle a legal dispute between the City and the former owner of Sparrows Point. Moving forward, Sparrows Point Terminal is seeking to enter into a long-term agreement with the City that will continue to allow flow of treated effluent from Back River WWTP through Sparrows Point's system and permitted outfalls. There are several reasons for an agreement, including:

- 1) Back River WWTP must operate within the required discharge limits of its permits. Ceasing the agreement could result in Back River WWTP & Baltimore City violating the conditions of its permits;
- 2) Discharge points for treated effluent are selected and controlled so that the quantity and quality of the discharges do not negatively impact the water quality of the receiving waters and ultimately, Chesapeake Bay; and
- 3) As Sparrows Point looks to redevelop into a global industrial logistics park, the readiness of high quality treated industrial water for potential use in manufacturing operations is a huge asset that we hope to use to attract businesses and jobs back to Sparrows Point.

Water Service Bill & Baltimore City

Recent discussions and articles on Baltimore City's outstanding potable water bills have placed Sparrows Point in the news recently. We would like to take an opportunity to clarify a few points.

- 1) The unpaid water bill with Baltimore City is a result of a dispute between a former owner of Sparrows Point and the City over metering and water usage issues.
- 2) Since taking ownership in September 2014, Sparrows Point Terminal, LLC has been working with the City on solutions to the metering issues. Sparrows Point Terminal's account with the City is current and in good standing.