



Clogged or blocked pipes are the main cause of sewer spills. Help us prevent this from happening.

- Mechanical & structural failures and human error can cause spills, but usually the problem is caused by clogged or blocked pipes that send wastewater backwards and out of manholes, onto the ground and sometimes into surface water. Kitchen grease and other fats, oils & greases disposed of down drains cause more than half of all sewer spills.
- Most spills are relatively small and can be stopped and cleaned up quickly. Left unattended, however, spills can cause property damage, foul odors, environmental problems and fish kills. In a worst-case scenario, they can create public health and safety hazards.
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities has a core mission and commitment to protect our environment. Our goal is zero overflows.

Help Us Protect Our Sewer System and Environment



Defeat the Grease Goblin

- Report suspected sewage spills by telephoning our 24-hour Rapid Response Team at 704-357-6064.
- **Don't pour grease down any drain!** Homeowners should dispose of animal fats & greases by freezing them in a coffee can - or mixing liquified vegetable fats with kitty litter or coffee grounds - and depositing them in the trash.

Where can I get the full report?

The complete 2002 Wastewater Performance Report can be obtained by clicking on the 'publications' button at www.cmutilities.com or by calling the City-County Customer Service & Information Center at 704-336-7600.



www.cmutilities.com

WASTEWATER PERFORMANCE REPORT 2002



PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT



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W A S T E W A T E R

WASTEWATER

What am I reading?



This is a summary report of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities' wastewater system performance between July 1, 2001 and June 30, 2002. The State Clean Water Act, effective Oct. 1, 1999, requires all wastewater collection & treatment systems in the state - public and private - to publish an annual report detailing how their system works and how well it performed during the year, including all reported sewage spills and overflows or other federal or local environmental violations.

How did we do?

Sewage spills & overflows are a continuing challenge in this community and elsewhere, but our record is a good one. During the last fiscal year your public wastewater utility safely collected, cleaned and discharged more than 99.99 percent of this community's estimated 26.3 billion gallons of wastewater. About 0.005 percent escaped the collection & treatment system in the form of sewage spills and overflows. We are pleased to have experienced fewer spills last year compared to our five-year average, but our long-term goal continues to be zero overflows and full compliance with all local, state & federal environmental guidelines.

Performance Highlights This Year

- Four plants earn national awards for high performance
- 11.4 miles of sewer pipe restored or replaced
- 785 miles of sewer lines cleaned (some

repeated cleanings included)

- Oil & Grease Prevention Program inspects grease handling facilities at 1,083 restaurants
- In January 2002, Utilities officials and leaders from North and South Carolina announce a landmark water quality agreement whereby Utilities unveils a five-year plan to slash 70 percent of phosphorus levels in treated wastewater discharged from the McAlpine, Sugar and Irwin wastewater plants.

Challenges

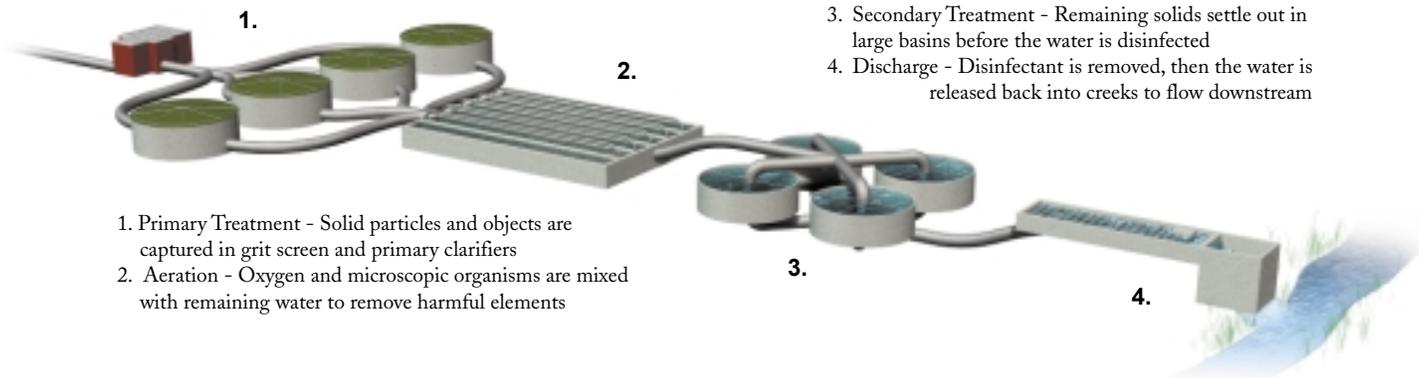
- 259 spills caused by grease blockages and other factors in the pipe delivery system; Seven spills occurred at wastewater plants.
- Continuous monitoring needed to prevent hazardous discharges into the sewer collection and treatment system

Where does our wastewater go?



Charlotte-Mecklenburg Utilities serves all of Mecklenburg County, providing wastewater services to more than 700,000 customers. An average of 72 million gallons of wastewater is collected daily through a 3,100 mile pipe network. Wastewater flows by gravity to one of five wastewater treatment plants -- McAlpine Creek, Sugar Creek, Irwin Creek, Mallard Creek & McDowell Creek. Each facility is staffed by state-certified operators 24 hours a day, 365 days per year to ensure wastewater is safely treated and discharged back into local creeks. Solids removed during wastewater treatment are safely recycled as part of a land application program.

How Your Wastewater is Treated



1. Primary Treatment - Solid particles and objects are captured in grit screen and primary clarifiers
2. Aeration - Oxygen and microscopic organisms are mixed with remaining water to remove harmful elements

3. Secondary Treatment - Remaining solids settle out in large basins before the water is disinfected
4. Discharge - Disinfectant is removed, then the water is released back into creeks to flow downstream