



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENT, GREAT LAKES, AND ENERGY
LANSING



PHILLIP D. ROOS
DIRECTOR

VIA E-MAIL

Gary Whittaker, Supervisor
Salem Township
P.O. Box 75002
Salem, Michigan 48175-0002

Dear Gary Whittaker:

The purpose of this letter is to discuss the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit application, received February 6, 2023, for a new Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) for the Salem Urban Services District (USD). It is our understanding that this application was submitted to the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), Water Resources Division (WRD) because Superior Township objected to the Salem Urban Services District (USD) connection to the Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority (YCUA) (WWTP that, in part, passed through Superior Township. Note that three Part 41, Sewerage Systems, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA) permits were issued for connection of the Salem USD to YCUA, which is a regional wastewater service provider. These are P41002827v.1 (October 8, 2020), P41003226v.1 (June 30, 2021), and P41003481v.1 (December 28, 2021), and some may need to be extended. The YCUA WWTP has existing capacity for this service area and has also approved the connection and the Part 41 permit applications. Portions of these sewer facilities would connect to YCUA through Superior Township along road right-of-way, but do not include any service area in Superior Township.

The WRD believes that connection of the USD in Salem Township to the existing YCUA WWTP is the preferable option over construction of a new WWTP in Salem Township. In fact, WRD is required to consider antidegradation requirements under Part 31, Water Resources Protection, of the NREPA, and the federal Clean Water Act, for the permit application for the new Salem Township WWTP. As part of this review, there is a viable alternative to construction of a new WWTP in Salem Township by using already permitted sewers with discharge to the YCUA WWTP. From the standpoint of minimizing impact to waters of the state, regional wastewater treatment solutions are preferred to new construction of individual municipal treatment plants. Any discharge from a new WWTP will have the impact of lowering receiving water quality, though it is still required to meet minimum water quality standards. Salem must demonstrate to WRD that this new WWTP is necessary given the above constraints, and we believe that connection to YCUA WWTP is that viable option.

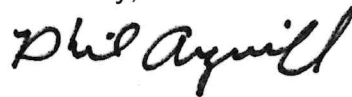
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The WRD understands that Superior Township opposes the routing of connecting sewer through its township, and that this issue is still in Washtenaw Circuit Court. As noted, that these sewers through Superior Township are along road right-of-way and do not include any service area in Superior Township. The WRD would ensure that no new Part 41 permits in Superior Township connect to these sewers, unless authorized and submitted by Superior Township and meet design requirements. It is also our understanding that there is a consent judgement that would prohibit anyone outside of Salem Township from connecting to the sewer.

For the reasons specified above, the WRD strongly supports connection of the Salem USD to the YCUA WWTP over construction of a new Salem Township WWTP, and in the current situation would draft a denial to Salem for a new Salem WWTP.

If you have any questions or concerns with this letter, please contact me at 517-290-3039 or ArgiroffP@Michigan.gov.

Sincerely,



Phil Argiroff, P.E., Assistant Director
Water Resources Division

cc: Luther Blackburn, Executive Director, YCUA
Ken Schwartz, Supervisor, Superior Township
Ken Jewison, Stantec
Christine Alexander, EGLE
Laura Verona, EGLE
Matt Staron, EGLE