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Commissioners



GREGORY A. TRAMONTOZZI
Executive Director

MATTHEW F. MURRAY
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“Protecting Public Health and the Environment”

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PVSC Honored With Prestigious AEANJ Wave Award

The Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission (PVSC) has once again been recognized by the Association of Environmental Authorities of New Jersey (AEANJ) for consistently demonstrating excellence in the public wastewater sector in New Jersey. In March, the agency received AEANJ’s “Forward Thinking” Wave Award for its efforts in enhancing stormwater resiliency at PVSC’s Newark plant. PVSC has earned 24 Wave Awards since 2000.



PVSC, as is the case with most wastewater treatment plants, is located in a low-lying area, adjacent to a large body of water (Newark Bay). Climate change is making wastewater treatment plants more vulnerable due to rising seas, more intense coastal storms, and increasingly heavy precipitation events. On October 29, 2012, New Jersey was ground zero for Superstorm Sandy. PVSC suffered significant storm surge that inundated its 140-acre plant with more than four feet of floodwaters. The flooding, compounded by the loss of two independent utility power feeds, resulted in a complete disruption of all treatment processes.

“The amount of water within the plant was staggering,” said PVSC Chairman Thomas Tucci, Jr. “PVSC has a significant network of underground utility tunnels. Because of the storm surge, the utility tunnels and below ground process areas were filled with more than 200 million gallons of water.”

In an effort to modernize and make its treatment process more efficient, PVSC is undertaking several significant resiliency projects. These projects call for upgrades to PVSC’s plant, including its process equipment and infrastructure. Many of the projects are well underway and already paying dividends. The FEMA-funded (90% funded by FEMA) resiliency/plant hardening projects that were approved in 2015 include:

- Construction of two permanent flood walls to protect the east and west sides of PVSC’s plant;
- Plant-wide replacement and relocation of switchgear and motor control centers;
- Construction of a 34-megawatt on-site standby power plant;

-MORE-

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- Plant-wide replacement of electrical cables and utility tunnel bulkheads;
- Construction of stormwater pumping stations;
- Storm collection system improvements; and
- Construction of multiple electrical substations.

“Preparing for extreme weather events required a lot more than a simple, quick fix,” Chairman Tucci said. “We really had to take a strategic look at the plant and its many assets, and then come up with a comprehensive approach with innovative concepts, to strengthen and defend our entire facility. We are honored to accept this award and are proud that our efforts were recognized by such a prestigious organization. This is a tribute to PVSC’s many outstanding employees and my fellow Commissioners, who have met the significant challenges presented by Superstorm Sandy and persevered.”