OPERATIONS

The treatment facility continues to perform very well, including weathering a very wet spring, followed by an unusually dry summer. Our assets continue to receive aggressive preventative maintenance, necessary replacement parts, and are managed closely to ensure our operation continues to run without any pause. The 22+ yards of biosolids produced daily continue being hauled by our staff to the Hartland landfill. We continue to explore emergency back-up options, as well as onsite volume reduction projects such as a biosolids dryer, and another evolving technology. We have relinquished all land application program and site licenses, and are working closely with the Maine DEP on funding and planning efforts for local and statewide biosolids management solutions. At the treatment plant, septic volumes from area communities continue to rise, and volumes of high organic strength materials that we are receiving to send to our anaerobic digesters to make biogas have been stable. Utility usage for power, water, and fuel continue to be stable and slightly decreasing.

COMBINED SEWER OVERFLOW (CSO) PROJECTS

We are on the home stretch of a large, three-phased Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) project. The first phase was installation of process control instrumentation and control system to help our operation and equipment facilitate additional wet weather flows, which was completed in 2024. The second phase includes increasing the pumping capacity in to our plant during wet weather from a maximum of 32 million gallons per day to 38 million gallons per day by installing two new 200 HP pumps, which are being installed by the Auburn company, Damon Mechanical. The pump project is expected to be completed by January 2026. The last phase is the largest component, and includes a new diversion structure, a pumping station and pumps, a 2.1-million-gallon storage tank, a support building, large stand-by generator, and ancillary equipment. This is a design-build (DB) project that is intended to capture all wet weather events that exceed a 1-year design storm event, and then allow for that captured flow to be brought in to the treatment facility once elevated flows recede to manageable levels. This project was awarded to the DB team of Woodard & Curran and Sargent Corporation, for a cost of $26,275,000. The team started construction in the fall of 2024, and plans to wrap up major construction by the first quarter of 2026, with the full project operational in the second quarter of 2026. This project is be funded by a combination of City of Lewiston ARPA funds, an Auburn Water and Sewerage Districts bond, and approximately $18 million in loans from the Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund (CWSRLF).

Last year was an average year for CSO events and volumes discharged at our CSO outfall (Structure B), and both Cities continue to find and remove sources of non-sanitary flow sources that should result in a less flow needing future storage and treatment at our facility. We are currently working with the City of Lewiston, Auburn Water and Sewerage Districts, and Tighe & Bond engineers to update CSO master plans for all three entities, prior to the end of 2026.

COMPOSTING FACILITY & AUBURN PROPERTY

Our operational ready and permitted composting facility in Auburn remains mothballed. We are negotiating with a prospective buyer for the sale and repurposing of the facility infrastructure and surrounding 96 acres of land. We are working through the site and license closure process now, and we anticipate selling the facility in the spring of 2026.

The Authority maintains a conservation easement on multiple previously owned parcels abutting the compost facility, and recently released 10-acres of conservation easement for solar development on one of the sites. The Authority has also approved the subdivision on the parcel at 371 Penley Corner Road, but will maintain the conservation easement on the divided parcels.

MISCELLANEOUS

We secured a Homeland Security grant with the help of Androscoggin EMA for the installation of security cameras, we finalized a climate adaptation plan, and have legally changed our name to the Lewiston Auburn Clean Water Authority. Our website, including videos and facility information documents are located at www.lacwa.org

A long-term board member, Norm Lamie, retired from the board in January and was replaced by Jim Horn, who will serve a 2-year term. Norm was recognized for his long-term service with the Authority board meeting room being named the "Normand R. Lamie Board Room".

We worked with the City of Lewiston to obtain approval for approximately 1/3rd of our biosolids to be landfilled at the ash landfill on River Rd. This provides the Authority with an emergency outlet if needed, but isn't something expected to be used often.

Major projects recently completed were: new chemical storage tanks and space windows, process building window replacement, replacement of all primary basin moving components, a new 20-year warranty roofing solution for the process and administration buildings, influent pump station control panel replacement, engine overhaul on one of the CHPs, and numerous digester mixing pump overhauls.