MSD's clAIRity Update – April 15, 2024

MSD's clAIRity Program is our ongoing work to mitigate the natural odor related to organic materials that decompose as a part of wastewater treatment and management. This monthly brief provides updates on the status of various projects under the clAIRity initiative over the past month.

This March's rainfall is nearly half the monthly average

Rainfall helps flush MSD's underground network of pipes, yet we continue to see below average precipitation across the community – contributing to increases in odor. The 2.31 inches of rain this March is 47 percent less than March's 30-year average of 4.37 inches, and 68 percent less rain than last year's wet March that brought more than seven inches of rain. The National Integrated Drought Information System (drought.gov) currently categorizes more than 30 percent of Kentucky, including about half of Jefferson County as "abnormally dry."

Response to Odor Reports

MSD received 52 requests for service related to odor in March, compared to February's 54 requests. The requests came from 20 different ZIP codes, and each resulted in an MSD crew investigating and responding as appropriate. The majority of service calls were related to odors observed near catch basins, sewer mains or manhole covers, and MSD crews on-site cleaned and deodorized the units, and in a few cases flushed with water. In one case, MSD odor response crews observed a colored discharge in an area creek and referred the case to MSD's Industrial Waste Department to respond. Investigation of another request found no MSD assets in the area, indicating a non-MSD odor source.

Catch Basin Replacements Moving Forward

"Untrapped" and outdated catch basins can be a source of odor, and MSD is leading an extensive series of projects to identify and replace them. In the Shawnee neighborhood, 202 basin replacement projects are scheduled for completion by this May, while in the California neighborhood a second phase of projects will replace 40 catch basins by October. With projects now complete or underway, MSD will have invested nearly $4 million to replace 295 catch basins across the California, Shawnee and Park DuValle neighborhoods by May 2025. In addition, MSD is finalizing documents to put 73 catch basin replacements in the Chickasaw neighborhood, plus 54 in Taylor-Berry out for construction bids later this year.

New podcast shares odor management best practices

Sewer odors, water affordability, and more are subjects discussed on the new *Talking H$_2$Onestly* podcast MSD launched in conjunction with the Water Environment Federation (WEF) Utility Management Community. As the name implies, *Talking H$_2$Onestly* presents honest conversation about the intricate and complicated issues facing water utilities and their customers across the United States. The debut episode takes a close look at sewer odors and how MSD, along with other utilities in Lexington, Milwaukee and Washington, DC are tackling these challenges. Listen to the new podcast at: https://www.buzzsprout.com/2340409.

For more information or to report an odor, visit LouisvilleMSD.org/odor or call 502.540.6000.

About MSD

The Louisville/Jefferson County Metropolitan Sewer District (MSD) works to achieve and maintain clean, environmentally safe waterways for a healthy and vibrant community. More than 670 employees provide wastewater management, drainage and flood protection services across the 376 square miles of Louisville Metro and wastewater service in portions of Bullitt and Oldham Counties. In addition to operating and maintaining Louisville Metro's sewer system, floodwall system, water quality treatment centers and flood pumping stations, MSD invests in hundreds of infrastructure improvement projects each year, plants more than 1,000 trees and other vegetation annually to enhance water filtration and reduce runoff, and provides numerous outreach programs to inform and educate the community about protecting our waterways.