

Bits & Pieces . . .

EPA Suggests \$32,000 Fine for Wastewater Treatment Issues at Parsons

The city of Parson has been advised it faces another consent order from the Environmental Protection Agency and will have to pay a fine for violations.

According to a report in *The Parsons Sun*, the city is working to delay the deadline in the most recent consent order regarding corrections ordered to be implemented for the city's wastewater system.

The original consent order mandates that the city reduce the amount of stormwater getting into the sanitary sewer through infiltration or cracked or broken pipes so that the wastewater treatment plant doesn't take in more water than it can treat during heavy rainfall or snow melts.

New violations concern the wastewater treatment plant. The most serious issue was discharged water that plant that had ammonia levels that exceeded standards. The city has determined that at a time when the plant lost power, the automation of the plant was reset which was not allowing the wastewater to be treated properly.

Another violation occurred when the *E.coli* level in the discharge water was too high.

Some of the violations are already being addressed by the city. These are the amount of total suspended solids discharged from the plant and the bypass of wastewater into the Labette Creek.

Another issues with the plant was that the sludge level in the plant's clarifier exceeded the target depth. The optimum level is 1 1/2 feet, but sludge levels at times were close to 12 feet, according to the news article.

City Attorney Ross Albertini was quoted as says that the EPA used a formula to come up with the \$32,000 fine but that the agency was willing to negotiate the amount and the city staff asked that it be reduced.

KGS, DWR Measuring Groundwater Levels

A crew from the Kansas Geological Survey has measured groundwater levels in 568 wells in January to monitor the sustainability of the High Plains Aquifer. The Aquifer is the source of water for much of western and central Kansas.

The well monitoring is an annual program conducted in coordination with the Kansas Department of Agriculture's Division of Water Resources which is in the process of measuring an additional 825 wells. Water levels are measured in December, January and February to avoid short-term declines caused by pumping during the growing season.

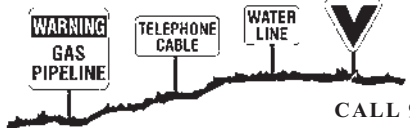
Given the above-normal precipitation across much of western and south-central Kansas in 2016, agency representatives were anticipated improved water-level changes compared to the experience of recent years. Some of the wells have been monitored since the 1960s.

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