

# Q2 2021 Quarterly Progress Report Niagara Falls Water Board Order on Consent R9-20170906-129

Prepared for submission to:

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Region 9  
270 Michigan Avenue  
Buffalo, New York 14203

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July 31, 2021



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Table of Contents

Table of Contents .....	i
Executive Summary .....	ES-1
1. WWTP Performance .....	1-1
1.1. Treatment Plant Operations .....	1-1
1.2. Solids Removal Performance .....	1-1
1.3. Treatment Plant Equipment Readiness .....	1-2
2. Deliverables and Routine Communications .....	2-1
2.1. Deliverables Status .....	2-1
2.1.1. Existing WWTP Optimization Efforts .....	2-1
2.2. Deliverables in Next Quarter .....	2-1
2.3. Routine Communications in Past Quarter .....	2-1
2.4. Unresolved Issues/Delays .....	2-1
3. Capital Improvement Program .....	3-1
3.1. In-House Capital Upgrades Completed/Underway .....	3-1
3.2. Capital Improvement Projects .....	3-1
Figures	
Figure 1 – Capital Projects Schedule .....	3-2
Tables	
Table 1 – NFWB WWTP Solids Balance .....	1-3
Table 2 - NFWB Submissions to NYSDEC per Schedule A of the Consent Order .....	2-1

July 31, 2021

### Executive Summary

This document is the fourteenth (14<sup>th</sup>) quarterly progress report for the Niagara Falls Water Board (NFWB) Order on Consent R9-20170906-129 (Consent Order) as originally required by Schedule A Item 15 of the Consent Order. This progress report covers the period from April 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021.

During the past quarter, the NFWB has properly operated the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) and has met all State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) permit requirements. Solids processing (settling, thickening, dewatering) during this period has functioned as intended. Primary effluent is clean which has allowed the WWTP's activated carbon filters to efficiently process the plant's influent flow. Dewatering throughput during this period has kept up with incoming solids, compared to influent solids loadings. The WWTP was operated free of significant odors during the past quarter.

Maintenance activities during the reporting period have been ongoing, and as of the end of the quarter major treatment systems and components are functional. The WWTP is undertaking a number of capital upgrades and improvements that are within the capability of the WWTP's maintenance staff and/or contractors awarded service contracts. In addition to the projects being undertaken by the WWTP's staff and outside contractors, project planning, design, and construction of \$27 million in major capital upgrades are taking place. Engineering contracts are in place for eight (8) of the nine (9) capital projects (Projects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9) and one (1) of the capital projects has been completed by plant maintenance staff with assistance from an outside contractor under the mechanical services contract (Project 8). Construction of capital Projects No. 4 (GAC Changeout) and No. 6 (Effluent Disinfection) are complete. Construction is underway on Projects 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7; and will be underway soon on Project 9.

The NFWB has met all scheduled requirements of the Consent Order as identified in Schedule A of the Consent Order. Specific submissions during the past quarter include:

- The thirteenth (13<sup>th</sup>) quarterly report for the first quarter of 2021 (Q1 2021) was submitted April 30, 2021 to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and posted on the NFWB's website (Consent Order Item 15).

The NFWB is committed to working cooperatively and openly with the NYSDEC to improve the Niagara Falls WWTP and operate it to the best of its capability.

July 31, 2021

## 1. WWTP Performance

This section discusses the operation of the NFWB WWTP during the reporting period of April 1, 2021 through June 30, 2021. In the following sections, Treatment Plant Operations, Solids Removal Performance, and Treatment Plant Equipment Readiness are discussed.

### 1.1 Treatment Plant Operations

Mr. Robert Dunn serves as the Chief Operator of the wastewater treatment plant. Until such time as Mr. Dunn achieves the necessary operator's license, Mr. Fred Kasper (New York State Grade 4 licensed Operator 12489) is serving as the licensed plant operator. Mr. Kasper spends 4 hours per day on average at the facility on a Monday through Friday basis and assists Mr. Dunn with his duties. During the reporting period there were no reported SPDES permit excursions. This marks a consecutive 40-month period with no SPDES permit excursions. Solids processing has kept up with the incoming solids, and equipment maintenance and repair activities have been conducted as promptly as possible.

The automated sodium hypochlorite control system is maintaining a more consistent effluent residual chlorine concentration and the visual appearance of the effluent is also more consistent. Sodium hypochlorite consumption remains high. Adding to the sodium hypochlorite use for effluent disinfection is the continuing practice of chlorinating the plant's primary effluent (carbon filter influent) and dosing all filter backwashes with sodium hypochlorite. The practices of chlorinating the primary effluent and backwashing with sodium hypochlorite has continued to result in longer filter run times, and a reduced number of backwashes compared to historical levels. As a result of the changes that were made to filter operation, all backwash water continues to be directed to the head of the plant, where it is retreated through the sedimentation basins and carbon filters. The plant has operated continuously in this mode without any incidence of 100' weir flow since the practice was initiated on February 3, 2020. Sedimentation Basin No. 5 is currently under construction to install new chain and flight sludge collectors as part of capital project number 1.

### 1.2 Solids Removal Performance

A solids balance for April, May, and June 2021 is presented in Table 1. The data is based upon effluent flow meter measurements and influent/effluent total suspended solids sample results generated by the facility. The data shows that the quantity of solids sent to the landfill has generally met or exceeded the amount of solids removed from the wastewater plus chemical solids added (ferric chloride and lime). Results near or greater than 100% generally indicate the plant is operating as intended.



July 31, 2021

### 1.3 Treatment Plant Equipment Readiness

During the reporting period there were several treatment plant equipment breakdowns that required maintenance staff to repair or replace equipment. Minor repairs have been made this past quarter for pumps, belt filter presses, and sedimentation basin equipment to address issues that have arisen. Although these repairs may have kept equipment out of service for periods of time during the past quarter, it has not significantly affected the plant performance. In general, a sufficient number of sedimentation basins with fully functional sludge removal equipment have been available to treat all incoming flows. As of the close of Q2 2021, the following can be said regarding treatment equipment operability:

- Four (4) Main Pumps are operational.
- Four (4) Intermediate Pumps are operational.
- Four of the five sedimentation basins are functional, with Sedimentation Basin No. 5 out of service for construction. During the past quarter, two (2) sedimentation basins have been used for flows up to 40 mgd, three (3) basins used for flows between 40 mgd and 60 mgd, and four (4) basins for flows over 60 mgd.
- Twenty-eight (28) activated carbon filters are functional.
- The filter backwash system is functional including two backwash pumps and two air scour blowers.
- Three (3) belt filter presses and related equipment (sludge and polymer feed pumps) are operational.
- Two (2) pugmills, two (2) lime feed systems, and two (2) lime storage silos are fully functional.

Niagara Falls Water Board Order on Consent R9-20170906-129  
Q2 2021 Quarterly Progress Report  
July 31, 2021

Table 1  
Q2 2021 NFWB WWTP Solids Balance

Month & Year	Average Daily Flow  mgd	Average Influent TSS  mg/l	Average Effluent TSS  mg/l	TSS Removed (Dry)  Tons/day	Ferric Chloride Added to Wastewater (Dry)  Tons/day	Lime Added to Sludge (Dry)  Tons/day	Total Solids (Dry) (TSS + Lime + Ferric)  Tons/day	Solids Content of Landfilled Sludge  %	Total Solids (Wet)  Tons/day	Solids Landfilled (DRY)  Tons/day	% Landfilled <sup>1</sup>  %
Apr-21	24.2	157.4	9.2	15.0	1.39	2.63	19.0	23.9%	79.5	18.0	95%
May-21	20.7	110.7	12.6	8.5	1.36	2.25	12.1	23.2%	52.0	14.9	124%
Jun-21	20.5	121.6	18.2	8.9	1.31	2.18	12.4	26.7%	46.3	16.94	137%

NOTES:    mgd        million gallons per day  
              TSS        Total Suspended Solids

<sup>1</sup>        % greater than or equal to 100 indicates all incoming solids plus all chemicals added are removed and sent to landfill.

July 31, 2021

## 2. Deliverables and Routine Communications

This section presents a listing and discussion of deliverables prepared by the NFWB for submission to the NYSDEC. In addition, other related written communications between the NYSDEC and the NFWB are also discussed.

### 2.1 Deliverables Status

All deliverables required under the consent order have been submitted to the NYSDEC in accordance with the schedule in the Consent Order. Deliverables submitted during the past quarter are listed in Table 2.

Table 2  
NFWB Submissions to NYSDEC per Schedule A of the Consent Order

Date	Prepared By	Consent Order Schedule A Items	Comment
April 30, 2021	AECOM	Item 15	The thirteenth quarterly progress report for the first quarter of 2021 (Q1 2021) was submitted.

#### 2.1.1 Existing WWTP Optimization Efforts

The procurement and construction of testing equipment for the chlorine dioxide alternative oxidizer/disinfectant study is complete. The study is expected to be started by the end of July 2021 and will take 30 days to conduct the treatment testing.

### 2.2 Deliverables in Next Quarter

All deliverables required under the Consent Order have been submitted. No deliverables are pending or due in Q3 2021 other than this quarterly report.

### 2.3 Routine Communications in Past Quarter

There have not been any significant correspondence or written communications between the NFWB and the NYSDEC during the reporting period.

### 2.4 Unresolved Issues/Delays

There are no unresolved issues or delays.



### 3. Capital Improvement Program

In this section, progress on WWTP capital upgrades is discussed. Capital upgrades are proceeding on several fronts. Projects that are within the capability of in-house maintenance staff are being undertaken as quickly as possible. Additionally, outside contractors selected for WWTP work (Mechanical Contractor – Mollenberg Betz, Electrical Contractor – Ferguson Electric) are being utilized for larger projects. Lastly, design and construction are underway to perform a number of capital upgrades that are necessary to stabilize the operation of the existing treatment plant. Each of these items is discussed in this section.

#### 3.1 In-House Capital Upgrades Completed/Underway

This category of projects includes work being undertaken by plant maintenance staff or outside contractors without the need for extensive design and engineering documents. This work is generally considered repair and/or replace in kind and therefore NYSDEC approval is not generally required prior to performing the work. At this time all work slated to be performed in-house has been performed.

#### 3.2 Capital Improvement Projects

A schedule for the ongoing capital projects is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1  
Capital Projects Estimated Construction Schedule



