



# **Oak Pointe Sanitary Sewer Consolidation Project**

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

### **How the public was made aware of this project?**

In October of 2012, Genoa Charter Township mailed an informational brochure to each resident connected to the Oak Pointe system informing them of the project plan and inviting them to a public informational meeting. Two public informational meetings were held at the Township Hall in November 2012. Since that time, we have published regular quarterly updates on our website, which have also been included in Oak Pointe Association newsletters. Lastly, the Township complied with the statutory requirement of publishing the notice of intent to issue bonds for this project in the local newspaper.

### **How was this project approved?**

The project was approved at public meetings of the Genoa Charter Township Board. The Township Board first approved a notice of intent to issue bonds on February 16, 2013. Following this resolution, a notice was published in the paper and the project had to pass a 45-Day Referendum Period. The Township board subsequently approved the engineering design contract on August 2, 2013, the Bond Authorizing Resolution on June 16, 2014, and the construction contracts on July 21, 2014.

### **Where can I get more information?**

Visit our website at <http://genoa.org/departments/utilities> for copies of the historic documentation for this site. You can also call the utility department at (810) 227 5225 or send us an email at [opcomment@genoa.org](mailto:opcomment@genoa.org)

### **Do I still need a water softener?**

Yes, you will still need a water softener, if you prefer softer water. This project is only affecting the wastewater system, and no changes are being made to the Oak Pointe water system. Therefore, whether you are on a well or the Oak Pointe Water System, we recommend continuing with your current in home water treatment processes.

### **When can I stop using potassium chloride?**

It is anticipated that residents can stop using Potassium Chloride in February of 2015. We will post a notice on our website, when Potassium Chloride use is no longer required. However, until that time, the Oak Pointe WWTP will still be online and discharging to the ground, which ultimately reaches the drinking water source for downstream residents. Once we are no longer discharging to groundwater, then Potassium Chloride use can stop.

### **If I change from Potassium Chloride to Sodium Chloride Salt, what do I need to do?**

Based on our research, you should not need to make any changes to your softener if you change from Potassium to Sodium Salt in your brine tank. We only caution that the brine backwash from sodium salt can be detrimental to plants and grass, and therefore should not be disposed of near plants or on the lawn.



### **Once the project is complete, can I connect my sump pump into the sewer?**

No, it is unlawful to connect your sump pump to the sewer system. In addition to typical softener backwash brine, sump pump discharge includes storm water, which can overwhelm the WWTP during periods of heavy precipitation.

### **Will I notice any change in service?**

You should not notice any change in service. The Oak Pointe System will remain independent, and operations personnel will not change. Oak Pointe will pay a wholesale treatment only charge to the Genoa Ocoola system for the actual gallons treated.

### **Why is the Sewer Base Debt Flat Fee Lower for Metered Customers?**

As Oak Pointe is mostly residential the Township finalized the debt repayment method on a per residential unit basis. A Sewer Debt Base Flat Fee (\$64/Quarter for Metered Customers and \$76/Quarter for Flat Rate Customers) will be applied to all customers, and an additional fee (Sewer Debt Above Base Fee, billed at \$1.70/1,000 gallons) will be applied to metered usage above 10,000 gallons per quarter. As the typical metered home uses approximately 16,000 gallons per quarter the typical metered home will pay the same fee as the typical flat rate customer.

### **How Are Multi-Family Buildings Being Billed?**

The sewer debt base flat fee will be applied to each residential home. Therefore, buildings with multiple units, such as condominiums, will be charged a flat fee per residential unit. A building with 3 residential units will be charged 3 Sewer Debt Base Flat Fees per quarter. In addition, the base for calculating the sewer debt above base fee will be based on the number of units, so a building with 3 residential units would not be charged additional usage until they reach 30,000 gallons in a quarter.

### **Why is the debt charge on our utility bills as opposed to our taxes?**

We assembled a financial team which included the Township's Accountant, Financial Advisor, and Bond Counsel to obtain funds for this project and to evaluate debt repayment options. For an established system with an independent operating fund, such as Oak Pointe, debt is often added to the utility bills as a debt charge. Additionally the debt charge on the utility bill provides more equity to the existing users by:

- Spreading the costs throughout the year rather than once.
- Allowing a portion of the cost to be based on usage, rather than each customer being charged the same regardless of usage. In this way, our smaller water users pay the lowest annual cost.

In order to place the debt charge on taxes, Genoa Charter Township would have had to create a separate special assessment district for all Oak Pointe users. This would have created a special tax zone for those affected properties to assess the debt charge on the taxes. The process to create this assessment district would have added unneeded administrative cost to the project, with no benefit as special assessment charges are not legally tax deductible. It is a common misnomer that assessments can be deducted from taxes; if audited they would be removed as a tax deduction