FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority Announces Stormwater Fee Updates

HANOVER TOWNSHIP, PA (January 15, 2019) The Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority, in partnership with 32 municipalities, is taking every step possible to improve the implementation of the new stormwater management mandate imposed by the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Recently, WVSA officials met with Secretary Patrick McDonnell of the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and State Senator John Yudichak. The WVSA is seeking guidance on measures that can potentially reduce the financial impact of the EPA mandate on local residents. WVSA will work with the DEP in navigating the challenging MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems) regulations governing stormwater management in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

WVSA recognizes that the EPA stormwater mandate will ultimately be an important investment in northeastern Pennsylvania’s public infrastructure assets that will improve our watersheds, restore the Susquehanna River, and reduce frequent flooding in our communities. Unfortunately, the federal government has passed the price of meeting these pollution reduction goals onto municipalities and ultimately—property owners. It is the charge entrusted to the WVSA, by our 32 member municipalities, to implement the EPA mandate as efficiently and cost-effectively as possible.

To that end, we have engaged in an aggressive community outreach program and we have heard numerous concerns raised by local residents. We are listening, and we are responding by making changes to our Regional Stormwater Management Program (RSMP) that will allow us to mitigate costs while ensuring compliance with the EPA mandate.

The stormwater fee is an evolving issue, and an important one for our region. Clean water, after all, is our collective responsibility. The WVSA remains committed to eliminating any confusion surrounding the stormwater fee and implementing it in a fair and transparent manner. In doing so, the WVSA will continue its community outreach campaign and will host briefings on the progress being made so everyone is aware of what we’re doing to ensure continued, cost-effective compliance with the mandate.

The WVSA, effective today, is doing the following:

1. An extension will be provided until March 15, 2019, for payment of the stormwater fee. If it is ultimately determined that a reduction of the fee is appropriate, those customers who’ve already paid their bill will receive a refund or credit.

(MORE)
2. The WVSA has and will continue to engage our partners at the DEP and the EPA to minimize the financial burden to our residents in achieving compliance with stormwater regulatory mandates.

3. We are eliminating all fees associated with the appeals process for any customer wishing to contest their bill under our appeals process.

The Wyoming Valley Sanitary Authority provides reliable, high-quality, and cost-effective wastewater treatment services for more than 172,000 Luzerne County residents. Founded in 1962, the WVSA is also now leading a regional approach to stormwater management—a collaborative measure to meet federal mandates aimed at protecting and enhancing the water quality of our local and regional water resources. Recognized for our commitment to environmental initiatives, collaboration, and community service, the WVSA is a proud recipient of the 2018 Governor’s Award for Local Government Excellence and the 2018 Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence. To learn more about us, visit our website at www.wvsa.org.

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