

FAQs on the Perkiomen Interceptor

What is the Perkiomen Interceptor?

The Perkiomen Interceptor is the system by which wastewater flows by gravity from the authority's six member municipalities to the Oaks Wastewater Treatment Plant in Oaks, Pa. The new interceptor is being constructed in three phases: 1) The lower section, which was completed in 2007; 2) The upper section currently under construction, and 3) The middle section now in the permitting stage.

Why a gravity interceptor?

A gravity interceptor is the most efficient, least costly and most environmentally sensitive form of transmitting sewage by gravity from the collection systems of the local municipalities to the treatment plant. The Perkiomen Interceptor does not require the use of a pumping stations which require the acquisition of land, construction of buildings electricity, backup power, repairs and maintenance and labor to maintain and operate.

What are the goals and benefits of the new gravity interceptor?

- 1) The Regional Authority will meet its obligation to complete the project under a Sewer Service Agreement with the incorporating Municipalities and their Local Authorities.
- 2) Infiltration of rainwater from leaks in the existing interceptor will be eliminated and some of the Inflow and infiltration burden will be removed from the Oaks Wastewater Treatment Plant. Operating costs will be reduced.
- 3) Sufficient pipe conveyance capacity will be available to handle flows coming from the collection systems of the local municipalities and to handle economic growth that is important to the creation of jobs for area residents.
- 4) The project will benefit more than 65,000 residents and hundreds of businesses in the six municipalities served by LPVRSa by providing capacity and protecting the environment.
- 5) The project conveys sewage without the noise, energy use, pollution and land acquisition that comes with utilizing pump stations.

What is Inflow and Infiltration?

Sources of extraneous flows are classified as either inflow or infiltration. Inflow is rain water that enters the sewer system from leaking and improper connections and from roof leaders, floor drains, perimeter drains and sump pumps that are illegally connected to the sanitary sewer system. Infiltration is groundwater that enters the sewer system through leaks in pipelines and/or manholes. Extraneous flows (clean water) enter the collection and transmission system and consume capacity that could be allocated for true wastewater disposal. Additionally, these extraneous flows do not require treatment, but unavoidably get treated at the wastewater treatment plant, leading to extra costs. All sewer systems have extraneous flows. It is impossible to eliminate all extraneous flows.

Have the environmental impacts of a new interceptor been studied?

Yes. LPVRSA has conducted environmental impact studies for the gravity pipeline including plant, animal, wetlands and archaeological surveys. All environmental impacts have been addressed

Were alternatives to a gravity interceptor reviewed? Why this location?

The Act 537 Sewage Facilities Plan adopted by the six member municipalities included extensive study of alternatives. The most cost-effective and environmentally sound system was chosen - a gravity sewer system along the Perkiomen Creek. In 2004, the PA DEP walked and approved the location of the interceptor as it was designed by LPVRSA's engineer.

At the request of Lower Providence Township, LPVRSA recently spent over \$6,500 to re-evaluate alternatives to a section of the interceptor requiring easements through the rear of Arcola Road properties. Most easements have been secured by LPVRSA, including easements from Lower Providence Township. Alternatives, including four (4) pump station options, and two additional gravity options on the opposite side of the creek were reviewed. The study concluded that pump station options would add from \$8,000,000 to \$33,000,000 and gravity options would add from \$3,000,000 to \$4,000,000 to the middle interceptor project costs. In addition, the construction impact of the interceptor along the designed route is less than the impact of any of the alternatives that were studied. Based on the review, the LPVRSA Board concluded that the gravity option previously approved by all six member municipalities and designed in 2004 is the best location for the middle interceptor.

How will the interceptor construction be funded?

The interceptor will be funded with a \$2.5 million state grant, reserve funds and borrowing.

Will the interceptor adversely affect any wetlands and recreational areas?

The interceptor will not destroy fishing, boating, swimming and other recreation on the creek as enjoyed by residents today. Wildlife and wetlands will not be destroyed. All easement areas will be replanted in grasses. Residents are free to plant trees and other plantings in the temporary easement areas.

Will the manhole covers for the interceptor be visible?

Yes. Manhole covers will be approximately 18 inches above the surrounding ground level.

Will there be any blasting that will affect homeowners in the area?

This project construction will be monitored by LPVRSA and local and state officials. Pre- and post-blasting inspections will occur in those areas where blasting for rock removal is required for construction.