

Authority Times

News and Information for Customers
of the Borough of Conshohocken Authority

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BCA Cuts Sludge Hauling Costs 36%

Over the past several years, the Borough of Conshohocken Authority has significantly reduced costs associated with hauling sludge from our facility to landfills. While sludge hauling remains the largest line item in our plant's operating budget, we have managed to reduce these costs by \$135,000 in our proposed 2026 budget—a 36 percent decrease since 2024.

Currently, we haul out Class C sludge, which limits our disposal options. However, we are nearing the threshold for Class B, with a long-term goal of achieving Class A classification. Higher sludge classes allow for more disposal options at reduced costs.

To support this continued progress, we have initiated a comprehensive study of our current process. This will identify optimization opportunities tailored to our specific plant design and provide a road map to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Our current sludge hauling savings have been achieved through multiple initiatives, including enhanced personnel training, improved digester management, lower sludge levels in clarifiers, ongoing gravity thickener maintenance, extended sludge detention times, and upgrades to our Belt Filter Press. Additionally, we have introduced seed sludge—healthy sludge sourced from a trusted facility—which has helped create a more favorable environment for microorganisms, thereby improving processing efficiency.

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BOARD MEMBERS

TINA SOKOLOWSKI
Chair

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Secretary

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MEETINGS

October 28
November 18

**Meetings are held in
the Borough Hall:
400 Fayette Street
Conshohocken**

Meeting time 6:30 pm

Bills can be paid online:
<https://xpressbillpay.com/#/?org=conshohocken-authority10890>

Odor Control Carbon Media Replacement Slated for 2026

As you may already be aware, in 2016 the BCA implemented a comprehensive odor control system. This system includes the enclosure of several key components: the influent pump station wet well, grit removal area, gravity thickener, and both digester tanks. These structures, along with the Dewatering and Disinfection buildings, are connected via a piping network that captures odors and channels them to a pre-filtration section of the odor control unit.

The pre-filter removes moisture, dirt, and grease from the air

before it enters the main vessel—an 18-foot-long by 12-foot-diameter tank that resembles an oversized residential heating oil tank. This vessel houses 19,000 pounds of carbon media, primarily made from activated coconut shell carbon.

The incoming air passes through one of two filter beds, each containing two carbon cells filled with 9,000 pounds of media. An additional 1,000 pounds is distributed across a shared bed at the top.

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Hauling Costs Reduced 36%

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As a result, our Belt Filter Press is operating more effectively. Higher sludge quality entering the press leads to better dewatering, meaning we are transporting more dry solids and less water—ultimately lowering hauling costs.

Recently, we hosted a demonstration of advanced sludge drying technology that noticeably improved digester performance within a week. A second demonstration with an alternative unit is planned, allowing us to compare performance and select the best solution.

Odor Control Initiative Coming Next Year

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The lifespan of the carbon media varies based on site-specific conditions, typically lasting between three and a half and eight years. At our facility, we have found that proactively replacing the media every five years yields the best results.

To determine when replacement is necessary, we send media samples to a laboratory for analysis, which helps us estimate the remaining effective life before odors may start to become noticeable. Our next scheduled media replacement will take place in 2026, marking our second full exchange.

Since the installation of this system, we have not received any substantiated odor complaints—an improvement from the period prior to 2016, when we occasionally received multiple complaints in a single night.



Henry Rix Joins BCA Maintenance Dept.

Our efforts to recruit qualified candidates for the Borough of Conshohocken Authority team led us to exhibit at a career fair hosted by the Automotive Department at Thaddeus Stevens School of Technology.

The two-year technical college in Lancaster County offers 25 trade programs to about 1,400 students.

The Authority's goal was to find someone with strong mechanical skills to join our Maintenance Department.

While many students were initially surprised to see a wastewater facility represented at an automotive-focused event, their curiosity quickly turned into interest once they learned about the opportunities in the wastewater field. The response was overwhelming—we left with 18 resumes that afternoon.

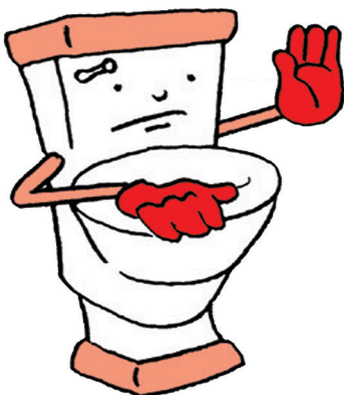
One of those resumes belonged to Henry Rix, who not only was the first to visit our booth but also returned later to continue the conversation. After reviewing all of the applications, the Authority



invited the candidates to an open house to tour our facility. Henry stood out as the clear choice. A Penn Valley resident, he brings three years of automotive training from Central Montco Technical High

School and a two-year degree in Automotive Technology from Thaddeus Stevens School of Technology.

Please join us in welcoming Henry to the Borough of Conshohocken Authority!



To Flush Or Not To Flush?

Remember: Do Not Flush

- Baby Wipes
- Pesticides
- Tampons
- Diapers
- Paint
- Metal or Plastic
- Fat, Grease, Oil
- Paper towels
- Pharmaceuticals
- Cat litter