



Frequently Asked Questions

Sodium Hypochlorite Situation

Updated 6/18/21

Environmental Services Sodium Hypochlorite Situation

- **What is the situation?**

On June 11, 2021 Tacoma Water and the City of Tacoma's Environmental Services Department were notified by Jones Chemicals Inc. (JCI) the primary supplier of Sodium Hypochlorite (chlorine) that they had an electrical transformer fail in a Chlorine manufacturing facility. The failure of this critical piece of electrical equipment stopped production, causing a region wide shortage of chlorine.

- **What does this mean for the Central Treatment Plant?**

Chlorine is used to disinfect wastewater and is sometimes used for odor control. The Central Treatment Plant (CTP) is reducing its chlorine dosage to conserve as much chlorine as possible and still meet permit requirements. The CTP currently has enough chlorine to last several weeks, and Environmental Services does not anticipate significant impacts to the operations at the plant in the short or long term.

- **Is the Central Treatment Plant the only facility that is affected?**

The Department of Ecology has indicated that wastewater plants throughout the region are forecasting shortages. Supplies range from virtually zero to several months.

- **How long will the supply disruption last?**

The manufacturer is estimating they will be up and running by Friday, June 25, 2021. After this date, it will take a few more days to ramp up production.

- **What happens if the CTP runs out of chlorine?**

We do have alternative means of treating Wastewater, but the CTP was designed to use sodium hypochlorite as a primary source of treatment. Other methods would take time to implement. Environmental Services will continue to monitor the situation and inform the community of any updates.

- **What about the North End Plant?**

The North end plant uses a different disinfection system and will not be affected.

As the Environmental Services continues to monitor this situation, updates will be posted to cityoftacoma.org/wastewater.