



Executive Summary

In 2004, the Village of Boonville Water Pollution Control Department agreed to participate in a pilot evaluation project with the New England Interstate Water Pollution Control Commission (NEIWPCC) and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). The purpose of the pilot project was to evaluate the Village of Boonville's wastewater collection system business practices. The evaluation provided an assessment of the gaps between the Village's current business practices and generally-accepted industry standards for wastewater collection system management, operation, and maintenance. With this information, the Village will be able to develop a prioritized long term plan to address the identified gaps. The pilot program was not only a learning tool for all parties involved, but also provided the Village with a foundation to better manage, operate and maintain their collection system.

NEIWPCC, NYSDEC, and the Village, together with input and assessment from outside experts, participated in the business practice evaluation and gap assessment. The scope of this project included the following tasks and is described in detail below:

- Task 1 Document Review
- Task 2 Staff Interviews
- Task 3 Business Practice Evaluation
- Task 4 Project Team Consensus Workshop
- Task 5 Matrix of Recommendations

Task 1 Document Review

The first step was to review and compare the Village's plans, policies and procedures against how work is actually performed, measured and reported. In order to do this, a compilation and review of relevant documents and supporting information was performed. The information from this review was used to formulate and prompt questions for the staff interview and field observation phases.

Task 2 Staff Interviews

Staff interviews were conducted in April 2007. The Chief Operator and Assistant Chief Operator of the Village of Boonville wastewater treatment plant were interviewed; along with several Village highway department staff who assist with collection system repairs and upgrades. The Village of Boonville clerk was also interviewed. The interviews ensured that every position and level associated with collection system management, operation, and maintenance were fairly represented. The interviews consisted of groups of 1 to 2 employees at the same level within the organization to avoid intimidation by senior staff. It is important to note that interviews must remain confidential and information gathered through the interview process has been presented in a generalized format in order to protect the confidentiality of organizational staff. The information from the interviews has been used as a tool to identify positive traits within the organization as well as opportunities for improvement.

Task 3 Business Practice Evaluation

The project team worked together to combine their findings of the document review and staff interviews to develop a draft Business Practice Evaluation Report and accompanying Evaluation Worksheet. In this evaluation, twenty categories - associated with collection system management, operation, and maintenance; as well as environmental compliance - were analyzed. Each category consisted of several subcategories which were then ranked based on their current performance level under the following criteria:

Stage 1 - Unaware

Stage 2 - Systematic approach not developed

Stage 3 (Low or High) – Defined, repeatable approach. High Stage 3 is generally considered an acceptable performance level.

Stage 4 (Low, Medium or High) – Approach with defined measurements and standards

Stage 5 - Continual improvement and refinement of all processes and procedures

Task 4 Project Team Consensus Workshop

Once the draft Business Practice Evaluation was completed, Village staff had time to review the documents. In April 2008, a consensus workshop was held with the Village of Boonville wastewater treatment plant management staff. Each of the twenty categories and their associated subcategories were reviewed during the workshop. The rankings presented in the draft evaluation were adjusted as the project team came to a consensus of the actual performance levels across all of the business practices.

Once the current performance levels were set, the team reviewed each category again in order to establish the desired level of performance with respect to regulatory requirements, public expectations and level of service.

With the rankings complete, the gaps (or opportunities for improvement) were clearly defined in the evaluation worksheet. The project team then prioritized the gaps with associated ratings of 1 through 5, with a score of 1 being high-priority and a score of 5 being low-priority. With the opportunities for improvement identified and prioritized, the Village had laid the foundation for a business optimization plan; a plan that is compliant with regulatory requirements and makes good business sense.

Task 5 Matrix of Recommendations

Once the consensus workshop was completed, a Recommendation and Action Matrix was developed. This matrix includes the priority ranking for each category, the associated findings, recommendations, risk, and consequence.



Acknowledgements

All of the Village of Boonville employees that participated in this project should be commended for their thoroughness and active support of the project. The information and data provided during the project was extensive and clearly the staff spent a great deal of time providing it. Without exception, everyone who participated in the interviews and field inspections was well prepared, extremely knowledgeable and highly professional.

Attachments

Attachment 1	Business Practice Evaluation Report
Attachment 2	Gap Analysis Evaluation Matrix
Attachment 3	Evaluation Criteria
Attachment 4	Recommendation and Action Matrix