



Department of Utilities  
Wastewater Treatment Plant  
2006 E Newberry Street  
Appleton, WI 54915  
920-832-5945 tel.  
920-832-5949 fax

**TO:** Chairperson Vered Meltzer and Members of the Utilities Committee

**FROM:** Chris Shaw, Utilities Director

**DATE:** January 5, 2023

**RE:** *Appleton Wastewater Treatment Plant Update regarding the Polymer Incident of December 26, 2023*

---

**BACKGROUND:**

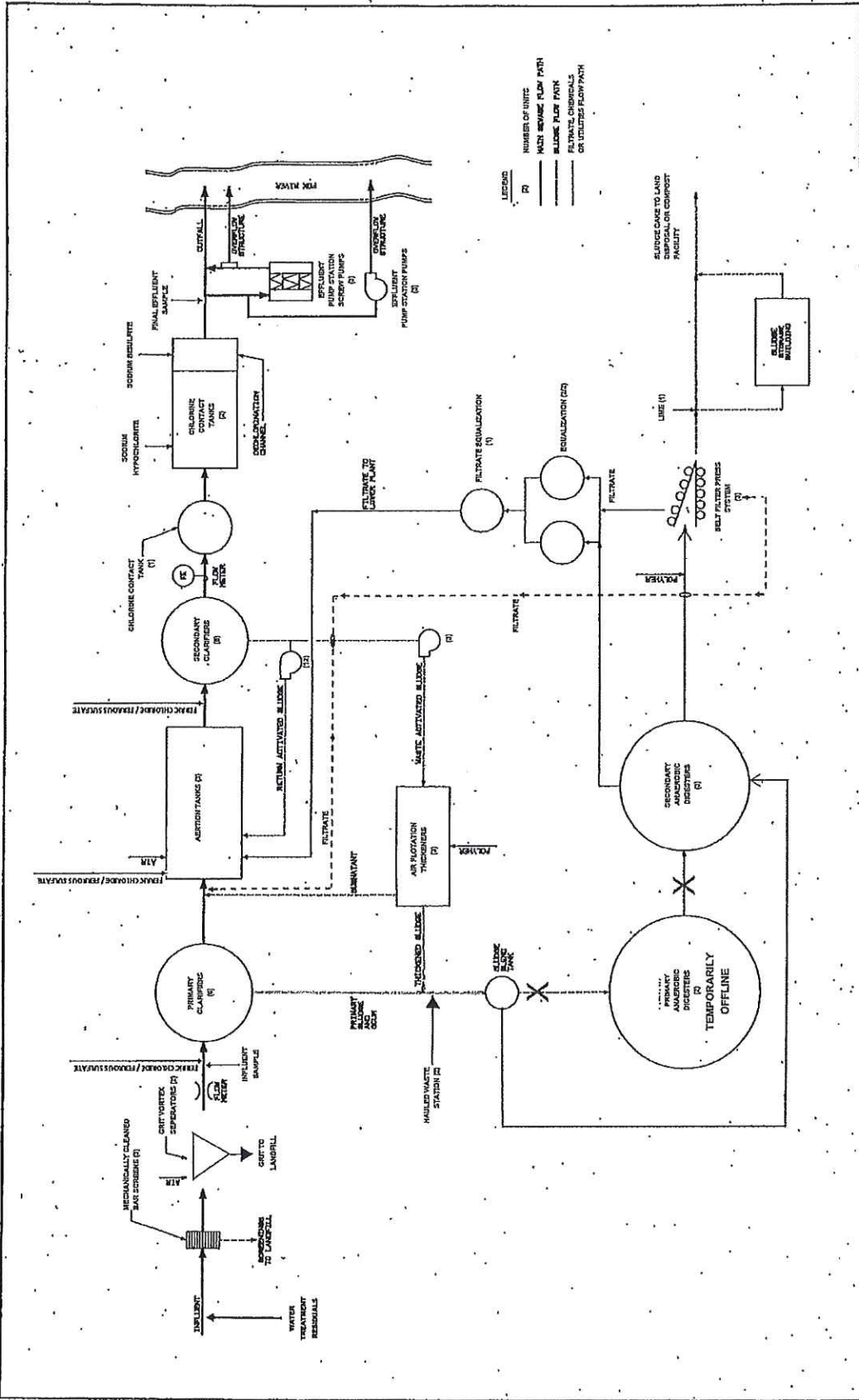
On Monday, December 26, a processing polymer chemical used for dewatering was off-loaded into the Hauled Waste Station. This resulted in equipment and pipe plugging, disrupting plant operations. Anaerobic digestion equipment was most impacted with loss of feed, gas mix, heating, and circulation. The plant staff paused all solids treatment to the digesters while a regulatory approval was being sought to bypass the digesters. With regulatory approval, the plant returned to functional treatment operations without digestion in the solids train.

Impacts of the process change are loss of methane production for heating the digesters and 17 campus buildings, pause of the Hauled Waste Program, and a degradation of the quality of plant solids produced in the treatment process. A return to anaerobic digestion will be needed to meet the Wisconsin Pollution Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permit requirements for our solid waste. Without digestion, the solids produced will have to be disposed of in a landfill. The plant effluent which is discharged to the Fox River has not been impacted from the change in the solids train.

Plant remediation efforts to date include inventorying, isolating, and removing the product from process equipment. Treatment assessments and repairs are underway with staff and contractors. Support has come from other city departments, contractors, and McMahon Associates.

The Utilities Committee will continue to receive regular updates as we work to resolve this incident.

If you have any questions regarding this process, please contact me at ph: 920-832-5945.



THIS DRAWING REDUCED TO HALF SIZE

DRAWING INFORMATION		DATE		REVISION		BY		CHECKED		APPROVED	
NO.	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE

**CITY OF APPLETON**  
WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEM

**PLANT FLOW DIAGRAM**