

Press Release
Town of Edgartown
March 21, 2024

Edgartown Saves Cost and Energy with Replacement Wastewater Pumps

Edgartown — Edgartown taxpayers will save about \$40,000 each year with six new sludge pumps, incorporating variable frequency drives and high efficiency electric motors, recently installed at the Wastewater Treatment Facility, according to a project report posted to the Town web site.

The energy saved per year is enough to power all the annual energy needs for about six average Massachusetts homes. It's also about 17 percent of all the electricity used by the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

About 70 percent of the \$550,000 cost of the pumps and their installation was covered by MassDEP's Gap Energy and MA DOER's Green Communities grant programs, coupled with Cape Light Compact's Energy Efficiency Program incentives. The Town's remaining 30 percent investment will be recovered by the cost savings in about four years.

Wastewater Superintendent Bill Burke led the team working on the grant financing, which also included Laura Selmer from Cape Light Compact, Alan Strahler from Edgartown's Energy Committee, and Town Administrator James Hagerty for Town funds.

The pumps are used in two critical processes of the sewage treatment plant, pumping the sludge that settles in the clarifiers and keeping the biological mass of the process tanks at the desired and necessary concentration.

The old pumps were pneumatic or air driven, losing large amounts of energy by using electric motors to drive air compressors, which then supplied air to the pumps. Each step in the process from beginning to end resulted in substantial energy losses.

The new pumps operate only when called for and are directly driven by high efficiency motors at reduced electrical consumption. The motor drives vary the speed of the pumps as needed to obtain significant electrical savings, while also reducing mechanical wear and tear on the pumps.

The Town's Wastewater Treatment Department is the largest municipal electricity consumer, accounting for nearly 40 percent of the Town's consumption. About 60 percent of the electricity supplied to the Town is from renewable sources.

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