

Akron Water Reclamation Facility Receives A \$108,000 Rebate

City of Akron Press Release

From the desk of stephanie york

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Akron, Ohio (July 14, 2014) - The City of Akron recently received a \$108,000 rebate check from their electric supplier, First Energy, for installing new high efficiency aeration blowers at the City's Water Reclamation Facility. The rebate was approved by the PUCO under First Energy's Mercantile Customer Program to support the State of Ohio's energy efficiency mandates. Under state law, First Energy is required to meet certain energy efficiency benchmarks, and may include efficiency projects performed by its customers. In return for committing to its energy efficiency project, the City of Akron received the cash rebate from First Energy.

The new aeration blowers were installed last year as part of a mandated project to increase the facility's wet-weather treatment capacity. The new blowers are 23% more efficient than the 35 year-old blowers they replaced, resulting in an annual saving of over 1.8 million kilowatt-hours (kWh) of electricity annually, or enough electric power to supply 170 homes. The new blowers will save the City of Akron \$154,000 annually in electrical cost for the facility.

The new High Speed Turbo blowers are equipped with magnetic bearings, which are designed to maintain a physical separation of moving parts in the machine. This separation eliminates wear and heat generation caused by friction found in most rotating machinery. The advanced electronics allow the blower to operate at speeds up to 10 times faster than conventional blowers, which results in a much smaller machine and increased efficiency.

"Our team worked hard to fulfill the requirements in order to get the rebate," noted Brian Gresser, PE, Manager, City of Akron Water Reclamation Services. "Thomas F. Smith, PE, Senior Engineer and Technical Advisor for Akron Water Reclamation Services, completed the application for the rebate and received the check on behalf of the City."

The Akron Water Reclamation Facility has undertaken numerous energy efficiency improvement projects over the last 20 years. Over that period, they have realized a 54% reduction in the amount of power consumed, and a 75% reduction in the cost of power. Most recently, the former Compost Facility was converted into the Renewable Energy Facility that uses an anaerobic digestion process to stabilize its biosolids, and generate nearly 10 million kWh of electricity annually, or enough to power 925 homes.

"I am proud to say that as caretakers of our environment, Akron continues to be at the forefront in implementation of environmental and energy initiatives," said Akron Mayor Don Plusquellic. "This is due in large part to our Greenprint initiative launched in 2007. I want to thank Brian Gresser, Thomas Smith, and their team for their efforts in making our Akron Water Reclamation Facility a model facility. Since initiating our Greenprint, we have become a recognized leader when it comes to innovative solutions to environmental problems."