



A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE METRO JPA/COMMISSION

Pre-1963

www.metrojpa.org

- There was very limited interaction between the Participating Agencies ("PAs") and the City of San Diego on matters related to the Metropolitan Wastewater System ("Metro System").

1963-1990

- The PAs contracted with City of San Diego for transportation, treatment and disposal of wastewater but had no role in decision-making.
- There was no assurance that San Diego Metro System and Municipal expenses were correctly allocated, and there was no definition of what expenses were allocated to the PAs.
- The PAs had no role in governance, technical or operational review of the Metro System, even though the PAs paid, at the time, 30 percent of total costs of Metro System.

1990-1995

- The San Diego Area Wastewater Management District, a special act district (the "SanDistrict") was authorized by state legislation to address the above issues. However, the SanDistrict was never fully implemented because of disagreements over weighted vote provisions. The SanDistrict still exists for grant purposes only.
- The PAs formed Agencies for Fair and Objective Rate Determination (AFFORD) to conduct engineering and financial audits.
- The PAs prepared to take legal action to force issues of governance and oversight. Their relationships with the City of San Diego grew strained.

1995-1997

- Dropping their confrontational approach, the PAs developed a new strategy of face-to-face negotiations with the San Diego City Manager. They formed a seven-member negotiating team which included city managers, general managers and technical experts.
- The PAs prepared a set of "Principles of Understanding" as the focal point of negotiations. They highlighted the economic argument that PAs must have a voice because they paid, at the time, 30 percent of the bill.

- After many drafts and negotiating sessions, the Principles of Understanding were approved by the San Diego City Manager and the PA negotiators. They became the basis for negotiations to update the 1963 contracts.



1998-2015

- In 1998, a new 52-year Regional Wastewater Disposal Agreement (“Metro Sewer Agreement”) between the City of San Diego and the PAs was approved. The Metro Sewer Agreement better defines the capacity rights of the PAs and the City of San Diego and establishes the PAs role in planning for future capacity.
- In addition, the Metro Sewer Agreement provides for the formation of the Metro Commission to advise the City on matters affecting the Metro System. Generally, elected officials from each of the PAs serve as Metro Commissioners and staff members of the PAs generally, but not always, serve as alternates.
- The Metro Commission became fully engaged in all regional wastewater issues. It now reviews every aspect of City of San Diego Metro System decision-making, from early project conception to completion. Issues now being reviewed by the Commission include:
 - Continuance of waiver of secondary treatment
 - Wastewater spills and beach closures
 - Storm water treatment regulations
 - Pricing of recycled water
 - Ocean water quality monitoring
 - Water recycling and re-purification
 - International wastewater treatment issues
- In January 2001, with the formation of the Metro Wastewater Joint Powers Authority (“Metro JPA”), the PAs are members of a legal entity that could more effectively address regional wastewater issues. The Metro JPA works together with the Metro Commission, which still acts in an advisory capacity to the City of San Diego. The Metro JPA employs engineering, financial and communications consultants to assist it with addressing regional wastewater issues.
- The Metro Commission/ Metro JPA unanimously supports the City of San Diego’s efforts to obtain a Waiver from the Federal Environmental Protection Agency to permit it to continue to operate the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant as an advanced primary wastewater treatment facility.

THE JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY PROACTIVELY ADDRESSING REGIONAL WASTEWATER ISSUES



2015-Present (The Pure Water Program)

- The Pure Water Program is a 20-year (2015-2035) multi-phased water and wastewater capital improvement program that is expected, upon full implementation by the end of calendar year 2035, to create 83 million gallons per day (mgd) of locally controlled water, which will provide one-third of the City's total potable water needs. The Pure Water Program will divert treated water from the Point Loma Wastewater Treatment Plant's (PLWTP) ocean outfall and recycle a valuable and limited resource that is currently discharged to the ocean.
- The Pure Water Program is designed to reduce sewage discharge into the ocean from PLWTP while providing a new local source of potable water for the City of San Diego. It is anticipated that continuation of the Pure Water Program will be reflected in future permits, which will eliminate the need for the City to make over \$1.8 billion in upgrades to the PLWTP that would otherwise be necessary if San Diego was required in the future to increase the PLWTP to secondary treatment.
- Due to the importance of this program a full description of it is contained in Section 3.5 of this manual. For additional information, including descriptions of facilities and treatment processes please refer to the City of San Diego's Pure Water Website which is continually kept up to date with the latest progress of the program.

<https://www.sandiego.gov/public-utilities/sustainability/pure-water-sd#:~:text=Pure%20Water%20San%20Diego%20is,%2C%20high-quality%20drinking%20water>