

Region 6 Compliance Assurance and Enforcement Division

INSPECTION REPORT

Inspection Date(s):	03/22/2023		
Media:	Water		
Regulatory Program(s)	Clean Water Act		
Company Name:	Ascension Parish		
Facility Name:	Ascension Parish – Silver Oaks Apts		
Facility Physical Location:	Germany Rd		
(city, state, zip code)	Gonzales, Louisiana		
Mailing address:	P.O. Box 1038		
(city, state, zip code)	Donaldsonville, Louisiana 70346		
County/Parish:	Ascension Parish		
Facility Contact:	Bill Dawson	Utilities Director	
	225-450-1136		
FRS Number:			
Identification/Permit Number:	LA0127295		
Media Number:	AI#197807		
NAICS:			
SIC:	4952		
Personnel participating in inspection:			
Michael Williams	EPA/ 6EN-WMH	Inspector	281-983-2150
Shedran Reese	Ascension Parish	Wastewater Operator	225-763-3156
Brad Duplessis	Ascension Parish	Stormwater	
Zianka Cayette	Ascension Parish	Environmental Compliance Officer	Zianka.Cayette@apgov.us
EPA Lead Inspector Signature/Date	 Digitally signed by MICHAEL WILLIAMS Date: 2023.05.29 17:41:22 -05'00'		Date
	Michael D. Williams		
Supervisor Signature/Date	ROBERTO BERNIER Digitally signed by ROBERTO BERNIER Date: 2023.05.31 19:00:09 -05'00'		Date
	Roberto Bernier		

Section I - Introduction

PURPOSE OF THE INSPECTION

EPA Region 6 inspector, Michael Williams, arrived at Ascension Parish – Silver Oak WWTP at 11:00 am on March 22, 2023, for an unannounced NPDES wastewater treatment inspection. During the opening conference, I met with Brad Duplessis, Ascension Parish Stormwater Inspector. Mr. Duplessis was informed that this was an EPA lead compliance evaluation inspection to determine compliance with the facility's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and the Clean Water Act. The scope of the inspection was with permit LA0127295, facility operations, and maintenance under the Clean Water Act. The inspection was conducted under the authority of the NPDES permit program, in accordance with the Federal CWA.

The information presented in this report is based on the materials and information supplied by the Ascension Parish representatives, observations made during the inspection, and records and reports maintained by the permittee.

FACILITY DESCRIPTION

The Silver Lakes Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) in Ascension Parish is situated off Germany Rd, between Hwy 61 and Sterling Oaks Drive. Its primary function is to treat the wastewater originating from the 336-unit apartment complex and the residential homes along Sterling Oaks Drive. The influent is collected through a gravity collection system, which then enters an in-ground lift station. From there, the influent is pumped via a force main into the extended air return activated sludge mechanical sewage treatment plant.

The plant is designed to handle a flow rate of approximately 0.116 million gallons per day (mgd). It comprises in-ground aeration chambers that facilitate the aeration and settling of solids. However, the facility lacks the capability to dispose of these solids and thus necessitates the use of sludge pumping and hauling methods to remove them from the system. Disinfection of the treated wastewater is achieved using a tablet chlorinator in the contact chamber. The final effluent is discharged through a pipe into an unnamed ditch located on Hwy 61, in front of the Silver Lakes Apartment Complex, before ultimately entering Bayou Narcisse.

On April 24, 2021, the residents of Ascension Parish voted in favor of selling all the east bank sewer assets to National Water Infrastructure (NWI), a private company specializing in sewer and water treatment. While awaiting final approval of the sale by the Public Service Commission (PSC), Ascension Parish Government (APG) has entered into a Cooperative Endeavor Agreement (CEA) with NWI to oversee the operation and maintenance of the system, ensuring compliance with the required standards.

To date, no significant sludge removal projects have been carried out at the Silver Oaks facility.

Section II- Observations

This inspection revealed the following observations:

During the inspection, it was observed that there was a noticeable bypass taking place in the aeration chamber. This bypass was occurring because the air blowers were causing the influent to blow up and out beyond the intended boundaries of the aeration chambers. It was noted that there was no secondary containment system in place to capture or contain this bypassed flow.

The clarifier chambers lack an efficient method of waste disposal in the absence of a digester. Without an effective waste management process the capacity and effective treatment are greatly reduced.

Section III- Areas of Concern

This inspection revealed the following areas of concern:

- Over the past three years, the facility has experienced multiple instances where it has surpassed the permitted levels for Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Total Suspended Solids (TSS). This can be primarily attributed to the accumulation of solids in the aeration basins and settling chamber. Since the facility lacks a digester and dewatering system, there is a risk that it will continue to exceed the permit limits unless appropriate measures are taken to address this issue.
- Ascension Parish remains unable to meet the minimum requirement of 5 mg/L of Dissolved Oxygen (DO) as mandated by their permit. One contributing factor to this issue is the absence of automated controls to adjust the airflow in relation to the wastewater flow. Additionally, the presence of a significant solids inventory further exacerbates the depletion of DO levels.
- The facility is bypassing the treatment process and is required to report any bypass. The facility is required to maintain the plant to ensure levels in the aeration basin have sufficient space to ensure no bypass occurs during normal conditions and wet weather conditions.

Section IV – LIST OF APPENDICES

- Appendix A – Photo Log

Appendix 1

Photograph Log



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Photograph Log

Photo No. 1

Location: Ascension Parish – Silver Lakes		
City: Gonzales	County/Parish: Ascension	State: Louisiana

Extended Aeration In-ground Plant





UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Photograph Log

Photo No. 2

Location: Ascension Parish – Silver Lakes		
City: Gonzales	County/Parish: Ascension	State: Louisiana

Lift Station





UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Photograph Log

Photo No. 3

Location: Ascension Parish – Silver Lakes		
City: Gonzales	County/Parish: Ascension	State: Louisiana

Aeration Chamber Bypass





UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Photograph Log

Photo No. 4

Location: Ascension Parish – Silver Lakes		
City: Gonzales	County/Parish: Ascension	State: Louisiana

Bypass of Chamber





UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Photograph Log

Photo No. 5

Location: Ascension Parish – Silver Lakes		
City: Gonzales	County/Parish: Ascension	State: Louisiana

Chlorine Tablets

