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SAUGET AND EPA CONSENT AGREEMENT

WILL IMPROVE AREA WASTEWATER TREATMENT

Sauget, Ill., March 16 -- The Village of Sauget will begin adding activated carbon to wastewater processed through its American Bottoms treatment facility as part of an interim consent order reached through a cooperative effort among the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the State of Illinois and the Village.

American Bottoms General Manager George Schillinger said carbon additions will begin March 20 and be increased as tests warrant. He said although the process will cost about $650,000 annually, there will be no present increase in rates to American Bottoms customers.

The consent order represents a partial resolution of a suit filed against the Village of Sauget by U.S. EPA in 1988. The suit alleges in part that wastewater discharged into the Mississippi River by the American Bottoms treatment facility is toxic. Sauget has denied all such allegations that the effluent is harmful or damaging to the environment.

"In fact, the Illinois Pollution Control Board, the tribunal which heard Sauget's challenges to conditions in its discharge permit, has determined that the toxicity effluent limit in that original discharge permit, and on which the U.S. EPA bases its allegations regarding toxicity violations, was 'arbitrary' and unsupportable," Schillinger said.

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