

St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission

Media Release

2010 Environmental Protection Agency PISCES Award

The St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission has been awarded the 2010 PISCES Award by the US Environmental Protection Agency for the Methane Gas Recovery and Electric Generation Project at the Marlay Taylor Water Reclamation Facility. The PISCES Awards (The Performance and Innovation in the SRF Creating Environmental Success) acknowledge and promote program innovations that advance EPA goals of performance and water quality protection and recognize projects identified by state Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) programs as examples of innovative and sustainable water quality financing.

The Marlay-Taylor Methane Power Co-Generation and Digester Upgrade project is designed to capture the methane generated during the wastewater treatment process, and use the gas to fuel generators in order to generate electricity for the treatment plant. Additionally, the heat produced from this process is used to supply the digesters with heat which will also aid in the production of additional methane. The work included the reconstruction of the two primary anaerobic digester lids; repairs to the interior of the digester tanks; and construction of facilities to capture, clean and store the methane gas. Two 165 kilowatt generators were installed to produce electricity that will be used at the Marlay-Taylor facility. It is anticipated that approximately 25% of the Treatment Plant's electrical demand will be met by this project as well as 100% of the digester heating needs. This endeavor demonstrates an innovative way to reduce methane emissions into the atmosphere as well as reduce energy costs without great expansions into previously undisturbed land.

Funding for the project came through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 (\$3,650,000) and the state Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) (\$255,000) for a total project cost of \$3,905,000. The design engineer for the project was Dewberry and Davis, LLC. The construction contractor was the Whiting-Turner Contracting Company. MetCom's oversight was provided by former Chief Engineer, Chester A. Frederick, P.E. and current Chief Engineer David J. Elberti, P.E.