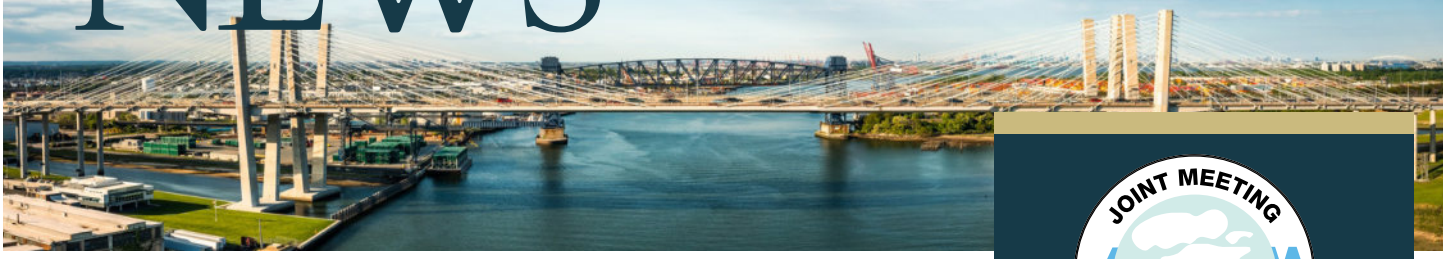
MARCH 2025 VOLUME 28, ISSUE 1

JOINT MEETING NEWS OF ESSEX AND UNION COUNTIES



FLOOD MITIGATION PROJECT



Effluent Pump Station – Overview of Construction (April 2023)

On October 29, 2012, the Joint Meeting experienced floodwaters generated by the Superstorm Sandy and experienced a high tide over (12') feet. As a result of the pre-storm preparations made by the Joint Meeting and the ability to power critical facilities on site via the Co-Generation Facility, the plant was able to continue to treat incoming wastewater to acceptable levels as defined by its NJDEPS Permit throughout the storm. However due to the extraordinary tidal surge during Sandy, floodwaters entered and inundated a number of locations at the treatment plant site. This flooding resulted in significant damage to some structures including the Laboratory Building, the Sludge Transfer Station, and the Biosolids Facility.

On May 17, 2018, members of the staff of the Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties (the "Joint Meeting"), along with their professionals, presented to the Joint Meeting Board the plans and cost allocations for the Flood Mitigation Facilities Project. The

A Newsletter of the Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties, a Wastewater Treatment Plant Serving Eleven Member Municipalities:

- East Orange
- Irvington
- Millburn
- Roselle Park
- Summit
- West Orange
- Hillside
- Maplewood
- Newark
- South Orange
- Union

Also serving:

- Elizabeth
- New Providence
- Livingston
- Orange

2025 Joint Meeting Board of Directors

East Orange	Bergson Leneus
Hillside	Lisa Bonanno
Irvington	Charnette Frederic *Treasurer*
Maplewood	Mayor Nancy J. Adams
Millburn	Mayor Annette Romano
Newark	Anibal Ramos Jr. *Vice Chairperson/ Secretary*
Roselle Park	Joseph E. Petrosky Alt. Gregory Johnson
South Orange Village	Mayor Sheena Collum
Summit	Delia Hamlet
Union	Joseph M. Florio *Chairperson*
West Orange	Joe Krakoviak

Executive Director
Hanifa Z. Johnson

www.jmeuc.com

FLOOD MITIGATION PROJECT



Effluent Pump Station – Overview of Construction (September 2024)

Project is broken up into VI Phases each of which covers a critical piece of infrastructure that when complete will work together to prevent damages and allow for continued operation during future storms.

The Phase I Project "Effluent Pump Station" diverts the gravity-fed flow into a state-of-the-art pump station to force the treated water through the operation of five (5) 50 MGD pumps. This Project is about halfway through construction.

The Phase II Project "Cogeneration Upgrade" requires an upgrade to the existing Co-Generation Facility by adding two (2) engines to generate additional electricity. Construction is planned to start shortly as approval of equipment and material submittals nears completion.

The Phase III Project "Main Plant Site Wall" involves the construction of a flood wall around the main plant. Construction has begun moving quickly as the excavation and relocation of material throughout the plant site continues.

The Phase IV / V / VI projects have not yet been awarded. These projects include the rehabilitation of an existing Army Corps of Engineer's stormwater pump station and the construction of a flood wall and stormwater pump station on the Dewatering side of the plant.



Main Plant Site Wall – Reach 9/9A Excavation, SW Corner of Site (September 2024)

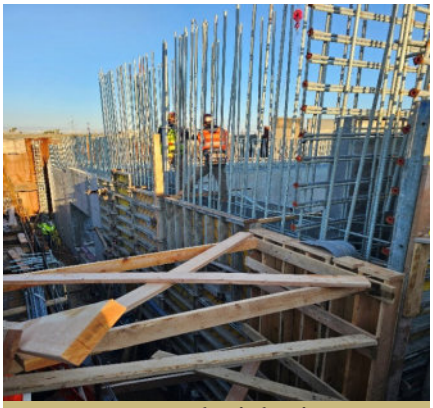
The Joint Meeting of Essex and Union County is currently in the construction phase on III of the VI FEMA-funded Flood Mitigation Project.

Phase I: Effluent Pumping Station

Awarded to Anselmi & DeCicco of Maplewood, New Jersey on November 15th, 2022, construction of the Effluent Pumping Station has continued in the upgrade and improvement to the Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties Water Waste Treatment Plant in Elizabeth, New Jersey. This state-of-the-art pump station shall force treated water through the operation of five (5) 50 MGD pumps. The project is currently 35% completed.



Concrete Pour on 1-Line Wall



Installment of Reinforcing Bar

FLOOD MITIGATION PROJECT

Phase II: Co-Generation

Phase II of the FEMA funded Flood Mitigation required The Joint Meeting of Essex and Union County to upgrade its existing Co-Generation Facility by adding two engines and a sub-station to generate additional electricity. Anselmi & DeCicco of Maplewood, New Jersey, was awarded this project, on May 1st, 2024, and is scheduled for completion, January 20th, 2026.



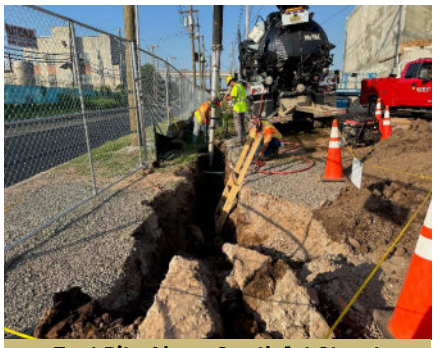
Co-Gen Facility



Co-Gen Facility

Phase III: The Main Plant Site Wall

Awarded to Michels Construction of Brownsville, Wisconsin, The Joint Meeting of Essex and Union County has begun the construction of a flood wall around its main plant. Notice to proceed was awarded on May 1st, 2024, with scheduled completion on January 13th, 2026.



Test Pits Along South 1st Street



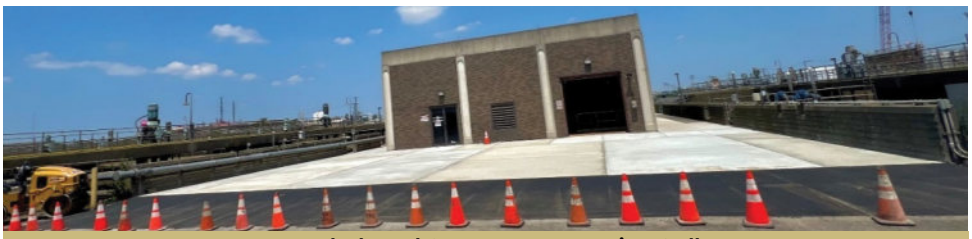
Test Pits Along South 1st Street

MISCELLANEOUS BUILDING REHABILITATION

Awarded to Anselmi & DeCicco of Maplewood, New Jersey by the Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties, notice to proceed was awarded on August 17th, 2024, with a scheduled date for completion on December 28th, 2024.

This project consists of numerous repairs and improvements around various buildings on the water treatment plant site. This project is currently 40% completed.

- Digester Penthouse
- Screen House
- Aeration Tank Gallery
- Dechlorination Building
- Sludge Dewatering Facility
- Old Chlorine Building



New Asphalt and Concrete at Aeration Gallery



Digester Penthouse Face Lift



Screen House Renovation

ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLIANCE AGREEMENT

On February 27th, a significant milestone was reached during a signing ceremony held at Elizabeth City Hall. After numerous meetings and extensive negotiations between the Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties and the City of Elizabeth, and under the guidance of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, both parties formally entered into a Compliance Agreement. The purpose of this agreement is to address and ultimately eliminate Combined Sewer Overflows (CSOs), which have long posed a threat to the environment.



This monumental project, which will span several years, aims to mitigate the negative environmental impact of CSOs, with a particular focus on improving the health of the Arthur Kill Strait, located between New Jersey and New York. Once completed, this initiative will have a profound and lasting positive effect on the local ecosystem and surrounding waterways. Representatives from the NJDEP, Joint Meeting and the City of Elizabeth attended the event.

From L-R: Brett Callanan, NJDEP • Dr. Xin (Cindy) Huang, CDM Smith • Charles Jenkins, NJDEP Joni Noble McDonald, Connel Foley • Francis Bonaccorso, JMEUC • Hanifa Z. Johnson, JMEUC Adewale Akinokun, JMEUC • Josie Castaldo, NJDEP • Susan Rosenwinkel, NJDEP • Mayor Christopher Bollwage, City of Elizabeth, John Papetti Jr., City of Elizabeth • Dan Loomis, City of Elizabeth • Steve Rinaldi, City of Elizabeth, Joe Mannick, NJDEP • Andrew Koske, NJDEP • Dwayne Kobesky, NJDEP

SCIENCE PARK HIGH SCHOOL STEM PROFESSIONAL DAY

On February 19th, 2025, JMEUC Executive Director Hanifa Johnson spoke at Science Park High School's STEM Professional Day. Director Johnson along with other STEM career focused professionals, presented the students, from grades 9 – 12, their personal insights on choices, decisions, support and overall experiences (life, academic and professional) that led to careers in STEM. Director Johnson shared her own personal story of how she has sustained, continued to grow and thrive as a product of the very same environments and communities of Essex County and Newark that they are from.



Director Johnson would like to extend a special Thank You to Principal Darleen L. Gearhart, Vice Principal Naseed Gifted, Student Ambassadors Haleeyah Olatunji and Kiswendsida Ouedraago, and the faculty, staff and students of SPHS for the opportunity to share in an effort to engage and ignite a curiosity and hopefully a passion to pursue STEM careers.

JMEUC EMPLOYEE NEWS

PROMOTIONS

Francis Bonaccorso
Promoted to Superintendent

Michael Phillips
Promoted to General Manager

Adewale Akinokun
Promoted to IPP Manager/
Laboratory Manager

Sandra Caceres
Promoted to Maintenance Manager

David Vieira
Promoted to Assistant IPP Manager/
Assistant Laboratory Manager

Roger Marques
Promoted to Operations Manager II

Michael Maffia
Promoted to Assistant
Maintenance Manager

Jaime Rivera
Promoted to Assistant Safety Manager
(Jaime also earned his
Certified Safety Manager Certificate)

Joseph Wiewiorski
Promoted to Operations
Training Coordinator
(Joseph also Passed his S2 Wastewater
Operator License Exam)

Jesse Ordner
Promoted to Operations Supervisor
(Jesse also Passed his S2 Wastewater
Operator License Exam)

Liam Campbell
Promoted to Operations Supervisor
(Liam also Passed his S2 Wastewater
Operator License Exam)

Marlon Echeverria
Promoted to Operations Supervisor
(Marlon also Passed his S1 Wastewater
Operator License Exam)

Jan Dmytrach
Promoted to Maintenance
Mechanic Supervisor

Andres Gallegos-Sanchez
Promoted to Collections Supervisor

Malika Johnson
Promoted to Assistant Purchasing/
Procurement Officer

Patricia Fraga
Promoted to IPP Analyst II

Joseph Polomene
Promoted to Operations Foreman

• • PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS • •

David Dipner
Passed his C2 Collection
System Operator License

Yuval Ghitelman
Passed his S1 Wastewater
Operator License Exam

Matthew Norberg
Passes his S1 Wastewater
Operator License Exam

Reginald Helms
Earned his High Pressure Black Seal
License & EPA Universal AC Certification

CONGRATULATIONS!

JMEUC EMPLOYEE NEWS

2023 MILESTONES

30 Years
Adewale Akinokun

15 Years
William Anderson
Maurice Clark
Darius Mayes

10 Years
Hector Reveron
Raymond Tango
William Negron

2024 MILESTONES

35 Years
Carmine Cristiano
Christine Ginn

30 Years
Michael Maffia

20 Years
Lenny Bucher

15 Years
Harby Guerrero
Malika Johnson
Christopher Pabst
Allen Paterson
John Petito

10 Years
Anthony DiNardo
Shawn Adams
Sorin Astalus
Jason Ball
Brian More
Michael Pelayo
Kellyann Quinn

INTERNS & MENTORS

Joint Meeting welcomed intern candidates for the summer of 2023 and 2024.

The candidates were referred from NJ Institute of Technology, Kean University and Union County College. The students were assigned to a mentor in the Electrical, Mechanical Maintenance, Projects and Information Technology department.



L-R (Back Row)
Aron Harris - Electrical Maintenance Supervisor
Chris Pabst - Projects Manager
Cesar Jurado – Projects Engineer
Jan Dmytrach – Mechanical Maintenance Supervisor
Ray Jimenez – I.T. Manager
Sorin Astalus – I.T. Cyber Security Analyst

L-R (Front Row)
Benjamin Palumbo – Electrical Department Intern
Connor Parrish – Projects Department Intern
Ioni Robertson – Mechanical Maintenance Intern
Marco Tlanipa – I.T. Intern
Hanifa Z. Johnson – Executive Director



Back Row L-R
Christopher Pabst
Humbertt Mortola
Nathan Rogers
Zachary Liming
Stephen Pascucci Jr.

Front Row L-R
Ray Jimenez
Marco Tlanipa
Faiza Fasso
Eric Serrano
Ray Tango
Aron Harris

JMEUC EMPLOYEE NEWS

WELCOME

• • NEW EMPLOYEES AT JMEUC • •

Nasir Bilaal
Boiler Operator

Kyeong Jang
Electrician

Fabian Ledesma
Mechanic

Edisson Flores
Site Services Worker

Shinese Charles
Laboratory Technician

Noah BaumGarten
Operator in Training

Vincent Corbin
Site Services Worker

John Mulroony
Operator in Training

Robert Wolf
Mechanic

Taimara Rivera
Lab Assistant

Anderson Valverde
Site Services Worker

OPERATORS IN TRAINING



(L-R) Laquan Harris, Jahod Howard, Xavier Rodriguez, Cristopher Cristiano, Terence Mayo, Shannon Garner

CONGRATS!

Adewale Akinokun is pleased to announce that his son, Akinola, graduated from Rutgers with a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Science.



CONGRATS!

Manisha Patel-Lab Technician
We are pleased to inform you that Manisha had a baby boy named Arjun Patel on June 30, 2024 at 5:36am weighing at 6lb 5oz. Baby and family are doing well.



JMEUC EMPLOYEE NEWS

RETIREMENTS

The Following Joint Meeting Employees Retired After Long Careers, Serving Joint Meeting with Both Honor and Distinction for a Combined "250 Years"!

Miriam Ledee, Accounts Payable
20 Years 12/17/2003 to 2/1/2023

Glen Schoenig,
Assistant Maintenance Manager
39 Years 8/13/1984 to 4/30/2023

Paul Cuttino,
Operations Manager II
33 Years 11/15/1990 to 6/30/2023

Steve Dowhan,
Superintendent, Project Manager
27 Years 6/26/1995 to 6/30/2023

Roman Wisniewski,
Maintenance Manager
32 Years 9/23/1991 to 9/26/2023

Antoni Wyczesany,
Electrical Department
27 Years 8/26/96 to 6/30/2023

Edward Kobovitch, Lab Technician
44 Years 10/04/1979 to 1/01/2024

Michael Foster, Executive Clerk
28 Years 1/2/1996 to 6/28/2024



Paul Cuttino



Miriam Ledee



(L-R) Roman Wisniewski, Glen Schoenig, Executive Director Hanifa Johnson, Antoni Wyczesany, Steve Dowhan



(L-R) Edward Kobovitch, Executive Director Hanifa Z. Johnson, Michael Foster

IN MEMORY OF LENNY A. BUCHER



On May 18th, 2024 Joint Meeting lost one of its family. Lenny Bucher passed away suddenly and far too young at age 53. Lenny was with Joint Meeting nearly 20 years, in the most recent years in the role of Engine Foreman. Lenny played a key role in keeping Joint Meeting's Cogeneration Facility up and running. Lenny was a BIG Philadelphia Eagles Fan and had an intense passion for competitively driving his drag race car on the weekends. He was a husband, a father, and a friend to all who knew him. We ALL miss him dearly.