

ST. MARY'S COUNTY METROPOLITAN COMMISSION



FISCAL YEAR 2017 ANNUAL REPORT

**Reporting Period:
July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017**

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ST. MARY'S COUNTY METROPOLITAN COMMISSION

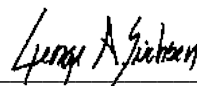
The St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission (MetCom) was created by the State Legislature in 1957 as a quasi-governmental, non-profit body, to supply water and sewer service to St. Mary's County and has been providing those services since 1964. MetCom is committed to providing quality, reliable services to St. Mary's County. While fulfilling our mission, we strive to:

- *Conserve and protect our reliable, high quality water supply for present and future generations;*
- *Meet or surpass public health standards, environmental standards, and support fire protection;*
- *Operate, maintain, improve, and manage our water and wastewater infrastructure in a cost-effective manner;*
- *Manage finances to support Commission needs and maintain reasonable water and wastewater rates;*
- *Maintain and adequate, safe and professional workforce; and*
- *Understand and respond to customers' expectations for service.*

As we look back upon the events of the last year, there were several noteworthy capital improvement projects that were accomplished: Receiving release from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) Consent Order for the Marlay-Taylor Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) upgrade - the largest capital improvement project in MetCom's history, which is now further reducing the nitrogen and phosphorus discharges into the Chesapeake Bay; being issued a Certificate of Operational Acceptance from the MDE for completion of the Automated Meter Reading (AMR) project; continuing the joint design and construction efforts with the County's Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) on the FDR Boulevard and Patuxent Park Neighborhood Revitalization projects; and constructing two new elevated water storage tanks in Hollywood and Charlotte Hall. You will read about these and other efforts throughout the following pages of this Report.

Other non-capital accomplishments in FY 2017 included: the continuation of our successful student Internship Program; completion of a Debt Study which evaluated the our financial health; formation of a Joint Task Force with the Commissioners of St. Mary's County to propose amendments to Chapter 113 of the St. Mary's County Code, which provides for the rights, authority and powers of the Metropolitan Commission; renewal of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Health Department, MetCom and the County Emergency Services & Technology Department to provide standard notification for Sanitary Sewer Overflows (*and we are proud to have reported zero (0) overflows during calendar year 2016*); implementation of a Salary Classification and Compensation Study; and our rigorous operations, maintenance, testing, and development review programs. Many other projects and initiatives will soon be underway and are outlined in the Plans and Objectives Section of this Report.

Our staff takes great pride in providing outstanding customer service while maintaining very high standards of environmental compliance and resource management. As the Metropolitan Commission looks forward to another year serving you, we will strive to find ways continue to better meet the needs of our customers as effectively as possible. ***"MetCom is people -- hard working public servants...they do it day in and day out—and I'm proud to be working with them!"***



George A. Erichsen, P.E.,
Executive Director



The Operations, Maintenance, Construction and Inspection Departments of the Commission are located at 43990 Commerce Avenue, Hollywood, Maryland 20636. Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Telephone: (301) 737-7400 / Website: www.metcom.org.



The Administrative Office of the Commission, including Fiscal and Engineering Departments, is located in the First Colony Commercial Center at 23121 Camden Way, California, Maryland 20619. Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Telephone: (301) 737-7400 / Website: www.metcom.org.

GENERAL OVERVIEW

MISSION STATEMENT

To construct, operate and maintain public water supply and public wastewater conveyance and treatment systems in a manner that is sustainable, reliable, economical and safe for the Commission's employees, the environment, and the citizens of St. Mary's County; and to ensure that construction is timely and in accordance with the St. Mary's County Comprehensive (Land Use) Plan.

BOARD MEMBERS

MetCom is governed by a Board of Commissioners consisting of seven voting members, and one non-voting member. Voting members represent the Election Districts of St. Mary's County and are appointed by the St. Mary's Board of County Commissioners to serve three year staggered terms. The eighth and non-voting member of the Commission is the Commanding Officer of the Naval Air Station Patuxent River, or his designated representative.

The Board Members during FY 2017, ending June 30, 2017, were:

Commissioners

Bryan M. Barthelme, Chairman
4th & 5th Election Districts

Robert A. Russell, Vice-Chairman
7th Election District

John J. Carey
2nd & 9th Election Districts

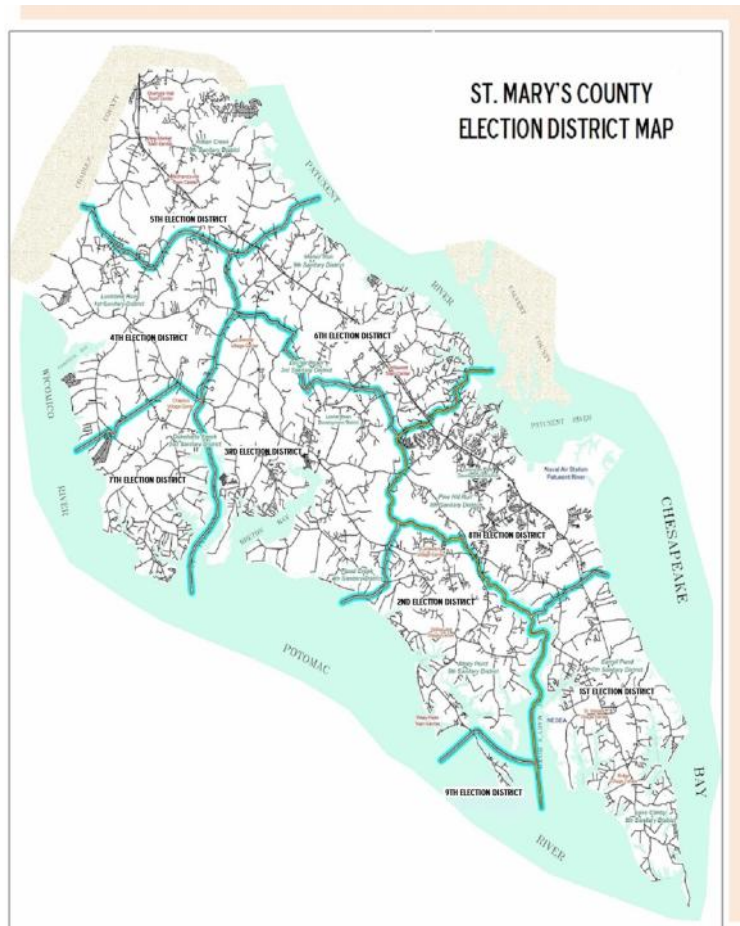
Alice A.M. Gaskin
1st Election District

Michael J. Mummaugh
3rd Election District

George M. Thompson
6th Election District

Steven P. Willing
8th Election District

Captain Scott Starkey
Patuxent River Naval Air Station



ORGANIZATION & KEY STAFF

The administrative leadership of the Commission is comprised of an Executive Director and five (5) Department Heads, as follows:

- George A. Erichsen, P.E., Executive Director (February 23, 2017 to Present)
- Rebecca B. Shick, Chief Financial Officer
- Maria C. Hollander, Acting Chief Engineer (November 4, 2016 to Present)
- Michael W. Sullivan, Chief of Facilities and Operations
- Anne Mary B. Cullins, P.H.R., SHRM-CP, Director of Human Resources
- Robert J. Fehn, Sr., Director of Information Technology

During FY 2017, Michael W. Sullivan (Jan 3 to February 22) and Daniel F. Ichniowski, P.E. (September 6 to December 31) served as Acting Executive Director. Scott J. Bundy was the former Executive Director, who departed MetCom on August 25, 2017. David J. Elberti, P.E., served as the Chief Engineer through November 3, 2016.

Additional information about MetCom and its staff can be obtained at www.metcom.org.



George A. Erichsen, P.E.



Maria C. Hollander, P.E.



Anne Mary B. Cullins



Rebecca B. Shick



Michael W. Sullivan



Robert J. Fehn, Sr.

Serving Our Customers in St. Mary's County Since 1964

FACILITIES OVERVIEW

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In addition to public informational meetings and customer service initiatives, tours of our facilities are provided to various organizations, civic groups and to the general public.



Marlay-Taylor Water Reclamation Facility Superintendent DuWayne Potter providing one of many tours of the facility to high school students and other interested groups.

WASTEWATER COLLECTION & TREATMENT

The Marlay-Taylor Water Reclamation Facility (MTWRF) is the largest treatment facility operated by MetCom and serves the Lexington Park, Hollywood and Piney Point areas of St. Mary's County. The facility is currently designed to treat 6.0 million gallons of wastewater per day. The average daily flow to the facility for Fiscal Year 2017 was approximately 4.0 million gallons. At present, a little less than one-third of the facility's design capacity remains available to meet the needs of growth in the community, keeping in mind that some capacity has been allocated for approved projects, which have not yet been constructed. A \$39 million, 3-year Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) upgrade has just been completed to the facility. As mandated by the USEPA's Chesapeake Bay Agreement, this upgrade significantly reduces the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus discharged from the facility into the Chesapeake Bay. Because the facility meets or exceeds all ENR requirements, on April 24, 2017, the Maryland Department of the Environment terminated their Consent Agreement for the facility.

In addition to the Marlay-Taylor facility, MetCom owns and operates four additional wastewater treatment facilities as follows:

- Wicomico Shores Wastewater Treatment Facility
- St. Clements Shores Wastewater Treatment Facility
- Forrest Farm Wastewater Treatment Facility
- Airedale Road Wastewater Treatment Facility

During Fiscal Year 2017, these sewage treatment facilities treated a combined average of 1.5 billion gallons, an average of over 240,000 gallons of waste per day.

MetCom also manages two private sewage treatment facilities under operating agreements with the owners of the facilities. Those facilities are the Chopticon High School Treatment Facility and the Charlotte Hall Square Treatment Facility. The facilities' owners remain responsible for meeting all Maryland Department of the Environment permit requirements and the owners reimburse MetCom for all costs incurred as a part of providing the technical assistance and expertise.

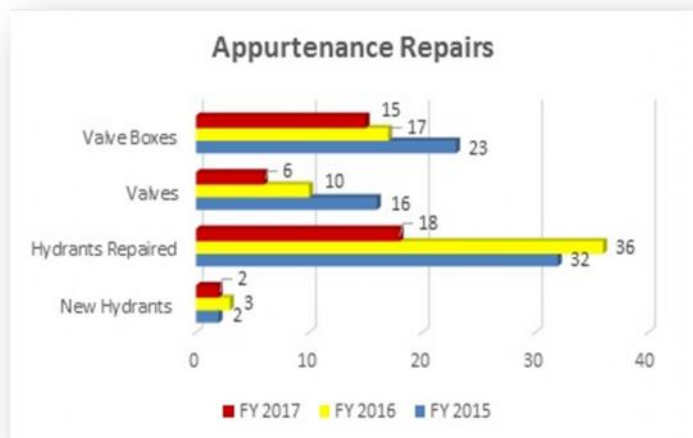
WATER SUPPLY & DISTRIBUTION

MetCom operates 28 water supply and distribution systems throughout the County and supplied 1.4 billion gallons of water. The largest of the 28 water systems is the Lexington Park water system, which serves approximately 44,000 citizens of St. Mary's County, and consists of 17 wells and approximately 4 million gallons of water storage capacity in above ground storage tanks. The average daily demand for Fiscal Year 2017 was approximately 2.5 million gallons of water per day, with the ability to supply over 5.0 million gallons of water per day. The remaining 27 water systems consist of 50 wells located throughout the County, and provide an average of 1.5 million gallons of storage capacity, delivering an average of approximately 1.2 million gallons of water per day during Fiscal Year 2017, to over 6,200 homes (an estimated 17,000 citizens).

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

The operations and maintenance staff are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to respond to and repair water / sewer main house connection and service pipe breaks. In FY 17, they performed 16 sewer main, 53 house connection and 833 grinder pump

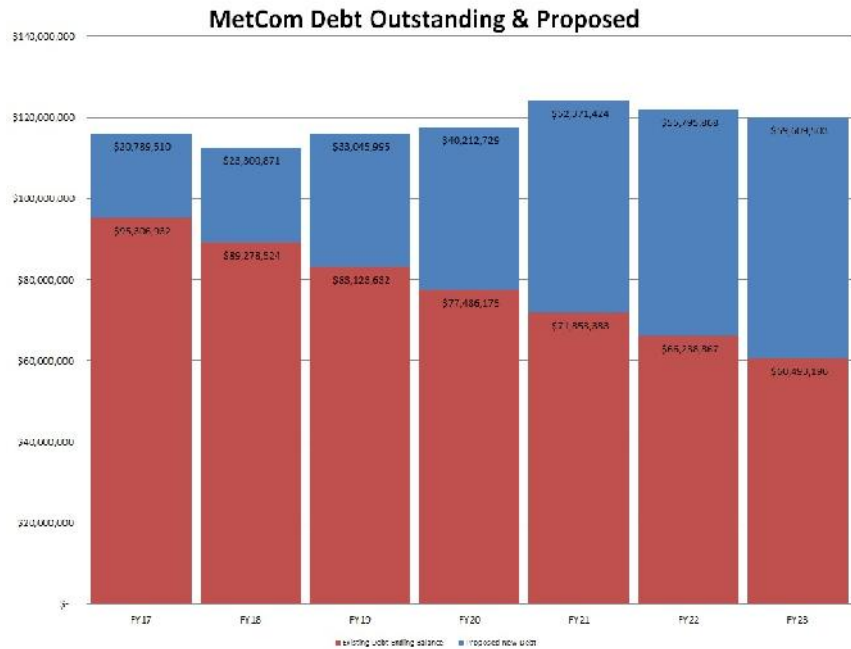
repairs. They also perform valve, hydrant and grinder pump repairs. In addition to emergency response, dedicated staff also perform maintenance activities and upgrades to 267 miles of sewer and 578 miles of water lines/mains. The Commission utilizes asset management programs to clean, map and assess conditions of its assets in conjunction with Geographic Information System (GIS) capabilities.



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW AND USER CHARGES

DEBT SERVICE

MetCom is retiring its debt at between \$5.6M to \$6.1M per year. During the FY 2018 budget cycle, the Commission made a conscious decision to take advantage of the retiring of existing debt and the rate at which new debt was incurred (*at right*) by establishing an informal combined debt ceiling of \$120M. MetCom was able to reduce its projected outstanding debt as a percentage of assessable base over the next six years to below 1% for the period of Fiscal Years



2017- 2023, well below the legal limit of 25%. In addition, legislation was passed under House Bill 1055 / Senate Bill 737, which included the Metropolitan Commission’s debt with the debt of the Commissioners of St. Mary’s County and capped the combined debt at 2.15%. The approved capital budgets are projected to be within the new debt limit through Fiscal Year 2023.

FY 2016 AUDIT

Executive Summary

Every year the Metropolitan Commission is audited by an independent auditor. In FY16, it was the opinion of Murphy & Murphy, CPA, LLC that the MetCom financial statements were presented fairly in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The financial highlights from the report are summarized below:

- MetCom’s total net position increased by \$1.1 million and \$10.3 million, or 1% and 10.7%, as a result of operations in FY 2016 and 2015, respectively.
- During the current year, MetCom’s revenue from operations was \$13.2 million, representing a decrease of 7.3% over the prior year. The current year decrease is due to the change in billing structure. The decrease was not unexpected, when the new rate structure was implemented it was understood that the rate structure would need to be adjusted over the next several years. In FY 2015, operating revenue was \$14.2 million, which was an increase of 2.8% over FY 2014.
- MetCom’s operating expenses excluding depreciation were \$12.6 million during the current year and \$11.7 million in the prior year.

- Depreciation Expense totaled \$9.5 million, an increase of \$5 million over FY 2015. Most of the increase, \$4.3 million, is due the retirement of assets at the Marlay-Taylor Wastewater Treatment Plant and water meters before they were fully depreciated, which is a one-time expense.
- MetCom's non-operating revenue was \$6.4 million during the current year and \$6.9 million in FY 2015, representing a decrease of 7.4% in the current year and an increase of 3% in the prior year. The decrease in the current year was mainly attributable to the decrease in debt service charges. The reduction in debt service charges is due to fewer Sewer Capital Contribution Charge payments in FY 2016 because many of our customers prepaid the Sewer Capital Contribution Charges in FY 2015 to avoid the rate increase in FY 2016.
- In FY 2008, MetCom established a trust fund for the management of assets and accounting for financial transactions associated with the provision of retiree health insurance coverage. In FY 2015, MetCom joined in the Maryland Association of Counties (MACO) Pooled Other Post Employment Benefit Plan (OPEB) Trust. The balance in trust was \$4.1 million as of 6/30/16 and \$3.7 million as of 6/30/15. In FY 2016, MetCom contributed \$507 thousand to fully fund the annual required contribution.
- On August 14, 2015, MetCom closed on two loans with TD Bank, for \$7.8 million to refinance some or all of Bond 17, Bond 21 and Bond 23.

To review audited Financial Statements from FY 2012-FY 2016, please see visit the Financial Report section of our website at <http://metcom.org/node/77>.

FY 2017 BUDGET

	<u>FY17 Original Budget</u>	<u>FY17 Unaudited Expenses</u>
<u>Income</u>		
Sewer Income	\$9,468,393	\$8,678,837
Water Income	5,257,097	4,860,164
Engineering Income	232,092	218,910
Other Income	166,400	246,753
Sewer System Improvement Charges	5,012,785	5,020,545
Water System Improvement Charges	3,109,499	3,123,644
Sewer Capital Contribution Charges	1,126,191	975,029
Water Capital Contribution Charges	1,485,076	1,019,648
Debt Service Reserves	450,000	0
Total Budget Income	\$26,307,533	\$24,143,530
<u>Expenses</u>		
Sewer Expenses	\$9,577,435	\$8,768,419
Water Expenses	5,257,097	4,456,829
Engineering Expense	232,092	218,910
Debt Service Sewer	6,588,976	5,361,402
Debt Service Water	4,594,575	3,236,969
Total Budget Expenses	\$26,250,175	\$22,042,529
Income Allocated To Reserves	\$57,358	\$2,101,001

USER CHARGES

The St. Mary’s County Metropolitan Commission does not receive funding from St. Mary’s County Government, or any other tax revenue. MetCom’s operating and capital budgets are funded from the revenues collected from user service charges and debt service charges. The three primary charges authorized by Chapter 113 of the St. Mary’s County Code are; Service Charges; System Improvement Charges; and Capital Contribution Charges, which are briefly described below.

Service Charges cover the daily operation and maintenance costs of MetCom facilities. These charges are billed monthly, on a per meter or EDU basis, to all MetCom customers who are either connected to, or required to be connected to, a MetCom water and/or sewer system. On July 1 2015, MetCom implemented a new rate structure, which included a Ready-to-Serve charge for both water and sewer based on meter size. The prior minimum monthly billed rate structure was eliminated and customers are now billed based on actual consumption for both water and sewer. The water usage fees are calculated based on meter size and actual usage, in accordance with a tiered structure, as shown on the Water Service Rates tabulation shown below.

Two additional changes to MetCom’s rate structure were made effective on July 1, 2016: (1) The Ready-To-Serve charge was eliminated for deduct irrigation meters for residential customers; and (2) Sewer usage was capped at a maximum of 10,000 gallons per month for residential customers with a 5/8” meter.

The new rate structure has encouraged conservation, which was one of the desired benefits, but has also resulted in less revenues than previously anticipated during the subsequent fiscal year(s). The approved Water Service Rates for Fiscal Year 2017 were:

<u>Water Service Rates</u>	<u>FY17 Water Rates</u>
Non-Metered per EDU/Month	\$16.44
Metered Rate 5/8” *	\$8.66 **
Metered Rate 1”	\$21.65 **
Metered Rate 1-1/2”	\$43.29 **
Metered Rate 2”	\$69.27 **
Metered Rate 3”	\$138.54 **
Metered Rate 4”	\$216.47 **
Metered Rate 6”	\$432.95 **
Metered Rate 8”	\$692.71 **
Metered Rate 10”	\$995.78 **
Water Usage Rate per 1,000 Gallons	Tiered
Water Usage Rate - Tier 1	\$1.56
Water Usage Rate - Tier 2	\$3.11
Water Usage Rate - Tier 3	\$6.23
Irrigation Usage Rate per 1,000 Gallons	Tiered

Water Usage Rate - Tier 1	\$3.11
Water Usage Rate - Tier 2	\$6.23
Hydrant Meter Rate per 1,000 Gallons	\$3.11

*** Tiered rate will depend upon meter size and usage*

The approved Sewer Service Rates for Fiscal Year 2017 were:

<u>Sewer Service Rates</u>	<u>FY17 Sewer Rates</u>
Non-Metered per EDU/Month	\$37.66
Metered Rate 5/8" *	\$15.97
Metered Rate 1"	\$39.92
Metered Rate 1-1/2"	\$79.84
Metered Rate 2"	\$127.74
Metered Rate 3"	\$255.47
Metered Rate 4"	\$399.18
Metered Rate 6"	\$798.38
Metered Rate 8"	\$1,277.37
Metered Rate 10"	\$1,836.22
Usage Rate per 1,000 Gallons	\$4.34 ***

* Standard Residential Meter is 5/8"

*** Residential 5/8" Sewer Service Capped at a Max of 10,000 Gallons per Month

System Improvement Charges cover the debt service costs associated with upgrading and replacing existing water and sewer systems and the costs associated with upgrading wastewater treatment plants to serve current customers. Each class of customers pays the same System Improvement Charge per equivalent dwelling unit (EDU). All properties that abut a public water line and/or sewer line, and that have been allocated capacity on any such line, are required to pay this charge, even if a property is not yet connected to a public water or sewer system. This charge can be revised annually and replaces the former Benefit Assessment charges.

The approved System Improvement Charges for FY17 were:

<u>Water:</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>
Residential / EDU / month	\$10.37
Commercial / EDU / month	\$12.44
 <u>Sewer:</u>	
Residential / EDU / month	\$15.09
Commercial / EDU / month	\$18.11

Capital Contribution Charges cover the debt service costs associated with the expansion of existing facilities to serve new customers and the addition of new facilities to accommodate growth. This one-time charge is required to be paid at the time a property owner makes application or otherwise is required to connect to a public water or sewer system. Capital Contribution Charges are calculated on a per EDU basis.

The approved Capital Contribution Charges for FY17 were:

<u>Water:</u>	<u>FY 2017</u>
Residential / EDU / Connection	\$8,892.67
Commercial / EDU / Connection	\$10,671.20
<u>Sewer:</u>	
Residential / EDU / Connection	\$6,348.98
Commercial / EDU / Connection	\$7,618.77

In addition to the above-referenced charges, **Bay Restoration Fees** are also collected monthly per EDU, as mandated by the State of Maryland and remitted to the Comptroller of Maryland to support the Bay Restoration Fund. For FY 2017, the monthly Bay Restoration Fee was \$5.00.

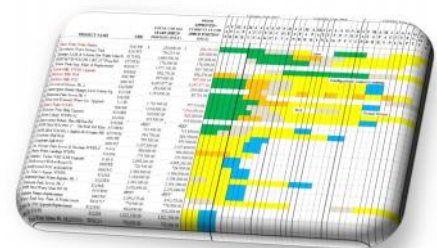
NOTE: An EDU is an Equivalent Dwelling Unit and represents the amount of water usage by a residential home, typically 250 gallons per day. Commercial uses may be assigned more than one (1) EDU depending upon the nature of the specific commercial use.

ENGINEERING OVERVIEW

The Commission’s Engineering Department reviews new development and redevelopment projects submitted for connection to the water and sewer systems. In order to protect the integrity of the water and sewer systems, projects must comply with all applicable rules, regulations and standards. Each year, over 100 development projects (*plans and plats*) are reviewed, ranging from capital projects to large-scale development to small, single family homes. Commission staff reviewed the designs and inspected the water and sewer services for several commercial and industrial sites, which are described in the Fiscal Year 2017 Accomplishments section of this Report.

Developer projects are routinely monitored and inspected by staff and approximately \$5.4M in surety bonds remained in place during FY 2017 to ensure contract completion in the event of contractor default. The capital improvement budget and plan is also administered by this Department, which entails scheduling, planning, design, permitting, land acquisition, construction and inspection services. The approved FY 2017 capital improvement budget included 12 new water and 20 new sewer projects budgeted at \$3,407,900 and \$5,707,439, respectively.

In addition, the Department helps manage the 23 projects that are currently funded through Maryland Water Quality Financing Administration and Department of Housing and Community Development Loan programs.



HUMAN RESOURCES OVERVIEW

Human Resources is responsible for Employment, Recruiting, Compensation Administration, Benefits, Wellness, Training and Development, Employee Relations and Regulatory Compliance of all Metropolitan Commission staff. During FY 2017, the Human Resources Department;

- Received and processed 384 applications,
- Posted 29 employment notices,
- Filled 19 vacant positions, and
- Facilitated 9 employee promotions.

A salary and compensation study was also completed and is summarized in the Fiscal Year 2017 accomplishments section of this Report.

STAFFING

As of June 30, 2017, MetCom employed 92 employees, as follows:

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Full Time	60	24
Part Time	0	1
Intern	3	3
Contract	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
TOTAL	63	29

As of June 30, 2017, MetCom's dedicated employees have over 900 years of combined experience, which are classified by years of service as follows:

<u>Service Years</u>	<u>Employees</u>
30 + years	5
25-29 years	4
20-24 years	7
15-19 years	14
10-14 years	11
5-9 years	14
< 5 years	37



BENEFITS MANAGEMENT

The Human Resources staff attended several seminars, classes and training events throughout the year to keep abreast of the ever-changing compliance issues with regard to employee benefits and to stay current with benefit strategies.

The following chart lists several benefits-related activities that Human Resources has facilitated this year:

Activity	Statistics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationwide Retirement Solutions Retirement Counseling Sessions • 3 Retirements & 1 Disability Retirement • 5 Worker’s Compensation Claims • 9 Family Medical Leave Applications • Open Enrollment Information Session • Wellness Fair • Flu Shots • 3 Lunch & Learns • RetireWise Retirement Seminar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 82% of employees participate in MetCom’s medical insurance • 84% of employees participate in MetCom’s dental insurance • 52% of employees participate in the 457B Retirement Plan • 51% of employees are enrolled in the Short Term Disability • 47% of employees have additional life insurance • 24% of employees have ancillary insurance (AFLAC) • 1 employee participates the Tuition Reimbursement Program • 48% of employees participate in the Flexible Spending Account (FSA) • 100% employees participate in the State Retirement System (mandatory)

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

MetCom works diligently to meet all legal requirements for training as well as provide training that will enhance levels of service to our customers and limit our liability.

Human Resources helps facilitate and track all required classes for water / wastewater operator and Superintendent licenses. We currently have 45 licensed employees. HR further tracks all Commercial Driver’s Licenses (CDL’s) and physicals associated with such licenses. We currently have 18 employees who hold a CDL license.



Employees Participating in Respiratory Training

As of June 30, 2017, MetCom has 2 Professional Engineers on staff, one Professional Human Resources and Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) - Certified Professional, and a Certified Professional Public Buyer. There are 52 employees with some type of water/sewer license on staff.



Employees Participating in Confined Space Training

In Fiscal Year 2017, employees participated in a total of 723 safety training classes totaling 1892 hours of training. MetCom has received one (1) Training Grant from Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) in the amount of \$1,310.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk Management is a collaborative effort between the HR Department and the Operations Department. HR and the Chief of Facilities and Operations work together to promote safety and protect the employees and property of MetCom. Several programs are in place to help us with that objective, including a worker's compensation program; drug and alcohol testing program, fully insured liability program and a risk management program. In calendar year 2017, there were no work related injuries reported.

The HR Director and the Safety Officer coordinate MetCom's Drug and Alcohol Testing Program. The Program includes pre-employment, random, reasonable suspicion, post-accident, return-to-duty and follow-up testing. The program also involves coordination with Deer Oaks, MetCom's Employee Assistance Program provider, for substance abuse counseling when needed. In calendar year 2016, there were 5 Worker's Compensation claims for a total payout of \$1,942.40, with no lost time.



Employees Participating In Sexual Harassment Training

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Metropolitan Commission (MetCom) maintains a successful paid internship program to assist college students. These programs; help students gain industry knowledge they may not learn anywhere else; give the students real, meaningful work that they can use on their resumes and that helps the organization; bring fresh, new ideas and perspectives; and might lead to being hired as a full time employee with the organization providing the internship. Our recent students were pursuing undergraduate degrees in Environmental Science, Chemistry, Biology, Chemical Engineering and Accounting. They attended the University of Maryland, St. Mary's College, Salisbury University and Christopher Newport University and offered the following comments on our program:

- ✓ *"Working as an intern with MetCom was an excellent experience that helped me navigate my transition between college and the 'real world'. I was able to learn more about public water utilities than I ever would have imagined, met great coworkers, and the professional setting was beneficial in preparing me for my next career step."*
- ✓ *"My internship at MetCom has greatly enhanced my knowledge of a working laboratory and its procedures. I've furthered myself by making some excellent professional connections within the organization. I have enjoyed learning about water quality, a career field that I am very interested in."*
- ✓ *"The internship program has given me valuable experience and has helped me learn new skills that I can use in future jobs throughout my career."*
- ✓ *"Working at MetCom has been an interesting experience so far. I am hopeful to learn much in the remainder of my time here and very much looking forward to the months ahead. The employees are dedicated to working hard, showing respect for one another, and practicing integrity, and that is a solid basis for and incredibly effective work environment."*
- ✓ *"Working as a MetCom intern has given me the opportunity and insight into how a large business operates. I have enjoyed applying skills I have learned in the classroom as well as learning new skills I will be able to use once I graduate college."*

FISCAL YEAR 2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

SYSTEM CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Several important capital projects were accomplished this year and are briefly described on the next several pages:

- **Automated Meter Reading (AMR).** MetCom is in the final stages of the water meter upgrade project, which was 95% funded through state grants and loans. The AMR water meter project upgraded a total of 13,150 residential and commercial water meters. These recently installed meters improve efficiency and allow for more timely and accurate monthly readings in lieu of manual readings previously conducted



**Automated Meter Reading (AMR) Project:
New Indoor Residential Water Meter Installation**



quarterly. At present, over 15,000 meter readings are taken each month.

MetCom staff is now able to read meters within a week using a truck mounted radio wave receiving unit. Replacement of approximately 3,000 Sensus “retro” meters with new Neptune AMR meters

with data logging capabilities was also completed as a part of this project. All construction is complete and a Certificate of Operational Acceptance was received from the Maryland Department of the Environment on February 1, 2017.



**MTWRF ENR Upgrade Project:
Completed Reactor Modification**

- Marlay-Taylor Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR).** The \$39 million Marlay-Taylor Water Reclamation Facility (MTWRF) Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) upgrade is completed and is in the process of being closed out. This is the largest and most expensive capital project MetCom has accomplished to date and was one of 65 facilities in the state required to be upgraded by the Maryland Department of the Environment. This treatment facility employed a BioMag treatment system which uses Magnetite (an inert iron ore particle) to enhance the clarification process. The existing concrete reactors were retrofitted to accommodate the new process. The improved ENR process allows reduction of total Nitrogen from 8 mg/L to 3 mg/L and a decrease in Phosphorus from 2.0 mg/L to 0.3 mg/L, which reduces the amount of nutrients discharged into the Chesapeake Bay.



**MTWRF ENR Upgrade Project:
Inside The New BioMag Building**

- Pump Station Upgrades.** Upgrades to the original 1970's wastewater pump station (WWPS) located on Lynn Drive that serves part of the Essex South Subdivision was completed in 2017. This project included the construction of a new wet well, control building, pumps, generator, and the installation of a new 6 inch forcemain.



**Lynn Drive WWPS & Forcemain Replacement:
Station Before Replacement**



**Lynn Drive WWPS & Forcemain Replacement:
Station After Replacement**

- **Water Storage Facilities.** The Construction of two elevated water storage towers and associated production wells located in Hollywood and Charlotte Hall are currently under construction. The Hollywood tower will provide 500,000 gallons of storage and a 400 gallon per minute (gpm) well while Charlotte Hall tower will provide 400,000 gallons of storage and a 250 gpm well. Construction is underway for both towers and wells, and is expected to be complete by the Fall of 2017.



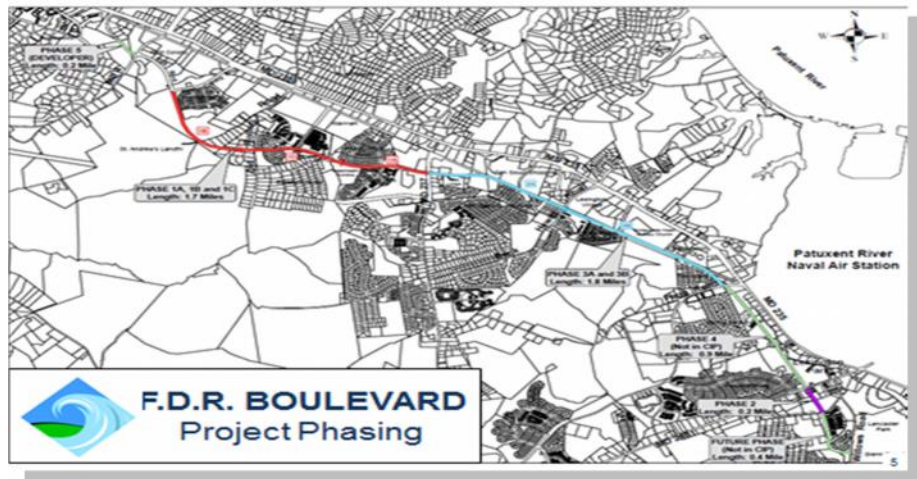
Hollywood Tower Project: Site Work



Charlotte Hall Tower Project: Well Drilling

- **FDR Boulevard Extension Phase 1A.** MetCom is completing the relocation of some water facilities impacted by the Department of Public Works and Transportation's (DPW&T) roadway extension project. This phase included the relocation of approximately 850 linear feet of existing water mains and 4 hydrants along Amber Drive from Kinnegad Drive to Chancellors Run Road. This waterline relocation work is expected to be complete by the end of the summer 2017.

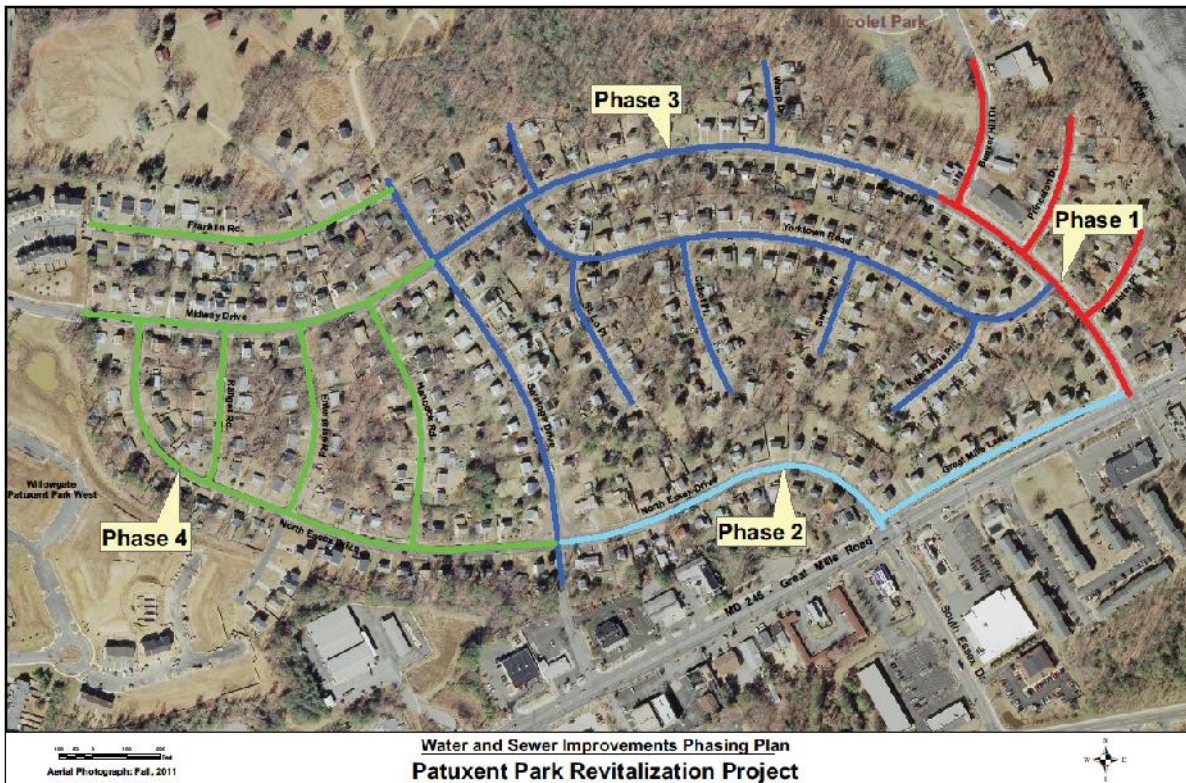
- **FDR Boulevard Extension Phase 1B.** In a joint venture via Memorandum of Understanding with the Commissioners of St. Mary's County, a second phase of the FDR Boulevard neighborhood connector project is currently under construction and is expected to be complete in the summer of 2017. This phase will consist of the installation of approximately 2,150 linear feet of water line, new fire hydrants, and new water service connections from the existing roadway at First Colony to Old Rolling Road.



- Patuxent Park Revitalization.** MetCom is coordinating efforts with St. Mary's Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW&T) to complete this neighborhood revitalization project for which MetCom is installing new and improved water and sewer infrastructure. Currently under Phase 3, MetCom is installing new water mains & services lines along with rehabilitating existing sewer mains and laterals. A combination of relining efforts and direct replacement will allow for the sanitary sewer system built in the 1940's to be upgraded to current MetCom standards. Both MetCom and DPW&T have completed Phases 1 and 2. DPW&T improvements include storm drain upgrades and replacements along with roadway and sidewalk revitalization. MetCom's water and sewer underground construction is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2017. MetCom Phase 4 is currently under design and is scheduled to be advertised for bid in the Summer/Fall of 2017. An overview of the phasing of this important infrastructure replacement project is shown below.



Patuxent Park Water & Sewer Replacement and Rehabilitation Project: Phase 3 Water Line Replacement



Patuxent Park Water & Sewer Replacement and Rehabilitation Project: MetCom Phasing Map

- **Economic Development.** In addition to MetCom funded or Capital Improvement projects, MetCom’s Engineering Department, which includes Construction / Inspection and Permitting Divisions, coordinate with developer funded projects to ensure design and construction meet current standards & specifications. This allows for a safe and maintainable countywide water & sewer system is achieved through design review and construction inspection performed by MetCom staff. The St. Mary’s Marketplace, located on the corner of St. Andrew’s Church Road and Three Notch Road, is an example of MetCom working closely with developers and builders to construct water and sewer facilities that will be utilized by the new shopping center. This shopping center will include the new Harris Teeter supermarket. Another developer project of interest is the new East Run Medical building that is currently under construction on Great Mills Road (MD 246) near the intersection with Chancellor Run Road (MD 237).



St. Mary’s Market Place: Developer Funded Project Under Construction



East Run Medical Building: Developer Funded Project Under Construction

OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE

Significant accomplishments for FY 2017 include:

Water and Sewer Line Right-of-Way Clearing

In order to quickly access water and sewer lines in the event of an emergency, MetCom began a project to clear rights of way for underground water and sewer lines, which are located in wooded areas. During Fiscal Year 2017, approximately 20,000 linear feet of right of way was cleared. This large scale contractual effort should enable ongoing maintenance to be performed by in-house staff.



Cleared Right of Way over a Cross-Country Sewer Line

Grinder Pump Replacement

In certain areas, MetCom's customers utilize sewage grinder pumps to convey wastewater from their properties into the public sewer collection systems. Many of these sewage grinder pumps are in environmentally sensitive areas such as waterfront communities. These pumps convey wastewater ultimately to the wastewater treatment



Contractors installing a replacement sewage grinder pump

facilities that treat wastewater more effectively than conventional septic systems. The multi-year Grinder Pump Replacement Project provides funding for the replacement of aged and worn sewage grinder pumps. During Fiscal Year 2017, MetCom replaced 50 complete residential sewage grinder pumps in the Piney Point and Tall Timbers communities.

Station Upgrades and Rehabilitation

During Fiscal Year 2017, MetCom completed numerous upgrades and rehabilitation projects on water and wastewater pumping stations. These projects ranged in scope from replacing pumps, fences, emergency generators and piping to complete overhaul of the stations with the ultimate focus on reliability, efficiency and environmental protection. Water and Wastewater stations that were addressed included Lynn Drive and St. Mary's City.



MetCom staff lowering a replacement generator at the St. Mary's City Wastewater Pumping Station

Water Tank Inspection and Rehabilitation



MetCom also continued the inspection and prioritized rehabilitation of existing water storage tanks. During Fiscal Year 2017, two water towers and six ground-based water storage tanks were rehabilitated and re-painted. This project will continue in future years in order to improve and maintain the reliability of MetCom's water storage facilities.

(Left Photo) Scaffolding set up at the Paw Paw Hollow in preparation for painting

(Right Photo) Interior of the Piney Point Landings Water Storage Tank during the medi-blasting process



Fire Hydrant Testing and Identification

MetCom owns and maintains over 1,600 fire hydrants within the 28 water systems. In order to ensure the hydrants are available in an emergency, and to meet the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the Insurance Service Organization (ISO) guidelines, MetCom contracts with a third-party contractor to test and inspect each fire hydrant at least once every three years. In Fiscal Year 2017, 1,090 MetCom fire hydrants were inspected and tested by out contractor. Each fire hydrant is uniquely identified through a database, and GIS maps are used by local fire departments to quickly locate fire hydrants in an emergency.



Water Operator Roy Person flushing a fire hydrant

Sewer Main Line Inspections

Upon review of the collected data, MetCom is able to initiate the most effective rehabilitation strategies. In order to focus and direct rehabilitation efforts on underground



Sewer Rover Camera used to conduct inspections

sewer mains, MetCom utilizes a series of technologies to help identify and prioritize maintenance and repair efforts. These technologies include Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) of gravity sewer lines to inspect the inside of pipes, pipe connections and manholes; cellular-based water level monitoring in the pipelines and sewer gas monitoring.

Underground Sewer Asset Rehabilitation

In an effort to combat corrosion and groundwater infiltration, MetCom maintains an ongoing Sewer Manhole / Wet Well Rehabilitation, and Sewer Main / Lateral Line Rehabilitation projects. In Fiscal Year 2017, 56 sewer manholes and 1 sewer wet well were rehabilitated, along with over 4,300 linear feet of gravity sewer lines.



Rehabilitated Manhole

WATER QUALITY TESTING & ANALYSIS

As a part of the recent upgrade to the Marlay-Taylor Water Reclamation Facility, a new state-of-the-art wastewater laboratory was constructed. This full services lab meets and exceeds all Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) requirements for wastewater laboratory testing, including accuracy testing on Discharge Monitoring Report Quality Assurance (DMRQA) and Standard Methods in the Examination of Water and Wastewater. The Commission is also

working toward obtaining a formal State Certified Drinking Water Laboratory designation from the MDE for our facility located at the Larry K. Petty Building.

Drinking Water. In fiscal year 2017, approximately 1,350 drinking water samples were collected and analyzed by MetCom staff to determine compliance with the federal Safe Drinking Water Act. These samples were tested by a third party laboratory and monitor parameters such as bacteria (*coliform*), lead / copper (*triennially*), arsenic, fluoride, nitrates, metals and disinfection byproducts. pH levels are monitored monthly (*612 samples*) and chlorine concentrations are analyzed twice per week (*5,304 samples*) by in-house operations staff at each of our 51 water pumping stations for submission to the MDE. Turbidity is also analyzed only when the operators suspect the water to be cloudy or there are customer complaints regarding cloudy water.

Watershed Protection. In addition to drinking water sampling, over 25,500 wastewater analyses were conducted in FY 2017 at each of our 5 wastewater treatment plants and 2 facilities operated by MetCom to determine compliance with the federal Clean Water Act. Water quality tests are performed on water entering and leaving each treatment process at the plants and throughout the Commission's distribution system. These analyses consisted of parameters such as bacteria (*coliform*), bio-chemical oxygen demand, nitrogen, phosphorus, suspended solids, pH, dissolved oxygen, acids, alkalinity and chlorine concentrations. The state and federal testing and analyses requirements under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits helps ensure the quality of the effluent being released into receiving surface waters.



Laboratory Technician Samantha Parsons conducting BOD Analyses

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The Information Technology Department completed the following initiatives during FY 2017:

- Completed upgrading all network and computer services at the Marlay-Taylor Plant to include on site server and domain controller, integration with new SCADA and control systems and workstation build out for the new Lab.
- Integrated new video monitoring and surveillance systems at Petty Building and the Administration Building.
- Increased reliability and hardened systems to Malware intrusion with new detection systems and hardware.
- Began planning and acquisition phase of SCADA upgrade project.
- Created new asset databases and SOPs for equipment dispersal and replacement.

FISCAL

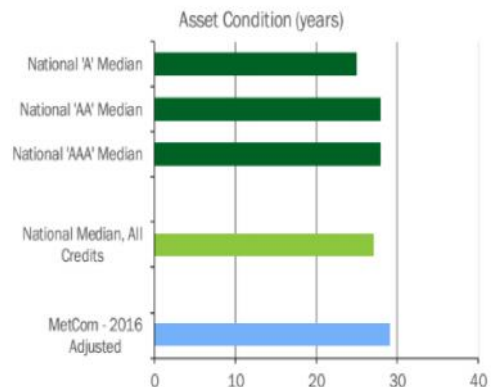
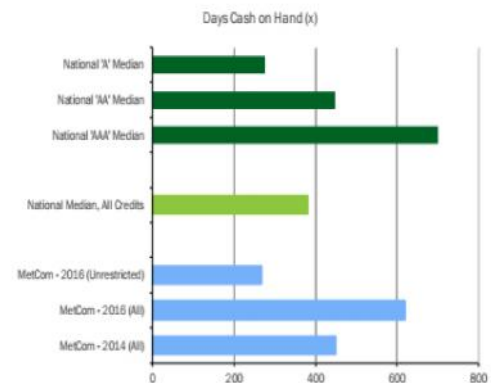
The Fiscal Department completed the following initiatives during FY 2017:

DEBT STUDY

In April 2017, the Board agreed to commission Davenport & Company to provide an update on the financial health of MetCom and to perform a Debt Study that would evaluate the impacts of several significant changes at MetCom since 2015. These impacts included; the complete rate restructuring implemented on July 1, 2015 that has had a major financial impact, ongoing discussions about Reserve Policy levels and use of reserves, the amount of outstanding and future debt, as well as the level of increases in charges and fees.

The following represents several key points presented:

- ✓ Moderate debt burden is slightly above national water and sewer medians, which means our system is not overleveraged and debt is expected to remain manageable in the near-term;
- ✓ Debt amortization for MetCom is relatively fast as compared to national medians, which means the possibility of providing opportunities for future deployment of cash into other projects;
- ✓ MetCom's cash on hand has improved since 2015 and is in line with National Sewer Enterprise medians;
- ✓ The cost of our services to the customer remains slightly below other national water and sewer systems; Even after the implementation of the six-year Capital Improvement Budget and Plan, MetCom remains well within its debt limits;
- ✓ MetCom continues to demonstrate the ability to pay debt service after accounting for operating expenses; and
- ✓ MetCom has a historically strong asset condition in line with national medians, which means we are reinvesting to maintain our plant and other assets (not deferring capital) slightly more than most other water and sewer utilities across the nation.



The Study further points out that we have recently implemented many best practices that have; better aligned project timing with future borrowing, refinanced some of our existing debt with more favorable rates, improved revenue projections, set internal limits to help stabilize rates and charges, set annualized target limits on increases to customer bills, taken advantage of retiring debt and limited the amount of new debt to help reduce rate pressure on customers. In short, "The Metropolitan Commission remains in strong overall financial condition..." The Moody's Municipal Utility Scorecard rating performed in conjunction with this Study also indicates that MetCom has an unadjusted rate of Aa3, which would indicate high quality and very low credit risk.

OTHER FISCAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Completed the conversion in the customer billing system of all of the accounts that were converted to a radio read meter.
- MetCom implemented a P-Card program to streamline the purchases that do not require purchase orders. By streamlining purchases, MetCom was able to reduce the associated overhead cost. There are also benefits to our vendors by eliminating the requirement to bill MetCom.
- Implemented Executime, an automated time keeping system for MetCom staff. Implementation of Executime reduces the risk of human data entry error. It provides automated tracking of leave time, gives supervisors access to their employees leave records, and streamlines the processing of payroll.

HUMAN RESOURCES

SALARY CLASSIFICATION & COMPENSATION STUDY

During Fiscal Year 2017, a Salary Classification and Compensation Study was performed by Management Advisory Group International, Inc. The goal of the project was to provide the foundation for an appropriate classification and compensation system and pay plan for consideration by the Board. The objectives included: ensuring that positions performing similar work with essentially the same level of complexity, responsibility, and knowledge, were classified together; comparing compensation to the labor market/competitors; and developing a competitive classification and compensation structure.



During the preparation of the Fiscal Year 2018 operating budget, a Salary Adjustment allocation was recommended and purposefully set aside as a part of the Public Hearing budget to specifically allow an opportunity to implement all or a portion of the results of the Study. This was made possible by reducing the proposed FY 2018 operating budget to levels below FY 2016 and FY 2017 funding levels.

As a result of the Study, the following implementation options were approved, effective July 1, 2017:

- Salary Adjustment. A 1.2% cost of Living Adjustment was provided to all employees.
- Market Range. There were approximately twenty-three (23) employees (*which represents 24% of the workforce*) that were below the minimum market range for their position. Organizationally, this was identified as an area which needed to be addressed to remain competitive and to improve recruitment and retention.

- New Pay Scale. The current MetCom pay scale was not uniform, nor was it flexible enough to address the diversity of the positions within the organization. As such, a more even new Pay Scale was adopted to provide more clear distinction between the various classifications and complexity levels of work within MetCom, placing all employees within a unified range plan.

The report confirmed that approximately 76% of MetCom's staff is being compensated within the current market range for their position. The market range salary survey results identified in the Study will be able to be utilized as a part of justifying salary needs when filling vacancies, proposing compensation levels for new positions, or addressing identified reorganizational recommendations.

The report also stated the following with respect to staffing levels: *"The number of staff is not unreasonable at MetCom given the number of facilities, pumping stations, and the geographical distribution of the facilities. Compared to Charles County and Calvert County, MetCom has fewer staff running more facilities in a more geographically diverse area."*

ADMINISTRATIVE

CHAPTER 113 TASK FORCE

At the May 23, 2017 Joint Meeting between the St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission and Commissioners of St. Mary's County, both governing bodies agreed to form a Task Force for the purpose of proposing amendments to the St. Mary's County Code, Chapter 113 – Sanitary Districts. It is this section of the County Code that provides for the rights, authority and powers of the Metropolitan Commission.

The fourteen (14) member Task Force is comprised of: a representative from the Southern Maryland Delegation, two Commissioners of St. Mary's County, two Metropolitan Commission Board members, a representative of the Health Department, two St. Mary's County citizens, Metropolitan Commission staff members (*Executive Director, Chief Financial Officer, and General Counsel*) and members of the St. Mary's County Government staff (*Director of Land Use & Growth Management, Chief Financial Officer, and County Attorney*).

The aim and purpose of the Task Force is to devise and recommend possible amendments to Chapter 113 of the County Code. The Task Force will present its recommendations to the Commissioners of St. Mary's County, the Board of the St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission, individually and jointly as well as to the St. Mary's County Legislative Delegation for consideration in preparation for the 2018 Legislative Session. The proposed changes to Chapter 113 should provide the Metropolitan Commission with additional authority and flexibility in order to implement new, improved, and more efficient programs and services to better serve the citizens of St. Mary's County.

Public Meetings will be held twice a month in the Main Meeting Room of the St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission offices located at 23121 Camden Way, California, Maryland, 20619.

FISCAL YEAR 2018 PLANS & OBJECTIVES

OPERATIONS

Continue with technology upgrades and rehabilitation projects to sustain reliability and environmental protection.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

- A complete upgrade and overhaul of the existing Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA) system will commence in July 2017 and will take the remainder of the calendar year to complete. This project will include replacing SCADA radios with faster units that can reject more interference and noise while providing more speed and higher data flow. The system will also be split into a Water and Wastewater network providing a significant increase in speed throughout, as well as reliability. The SCADA system provides constant monitoring and auto alarm notifications of line pressure, voltage, chlorine levels, water levels in towers / storage tanks, intrusion (security), wet well levels, generator power, pump and pump station status
- Replace aging backup software.
- Replace outdated network monitoring system and software.
- Retire and replace aging workstations and portable devices.



FISCAL

MetCom plans to purchase and implement new Financial System Software that includes Utility Billing and Permitting capability. This software is expected to improve employee efficiency and enable MetCom to provide better customer service to our Utility Billing customers.

SYSTEM CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

There are several previously approved capital projects that should be moving forward during the upcoming fiscal year:

- **Piney Point Water System.** Construction bids for the replacement of the existing water system originally built in the 1940's were received in March 2017. The Project will replace over 3,200 linear feet of waterline and add approximately 2,500 linear feet of new water main to service 135 residential and 110 commercial customers.

- **Piney Point Wastewater Pumping Station and Water Station.** Design for the major upgrade and partial replacement of the existing wastewater pumping station built in 187 is approximately 75% completed with Phase 1 of the water station design (*relocation of station and tanks*) to begin by Fall 2017.
- **Great Mills Wastewater Pumping Station Upgrade.** Design for capacity expansion was completed and construction bids will be opened in August 2017. To manage anticipated growth in the service area, the proposed station will have storage for 2,600 gallons and be capable of pumping over 1,000 gallons per minute.
- **Hickory Hills Water Storage Tower & Well.** Design is 90% completed with land acquisition also near completion. Construction is expected to be bid and awarded during fiscal year 2018. The original 1992 water storage tower will be replaced with a new 2 million gallon facility to serve the greater Lexington Park water system. The new production well will provide 700 gallons per minute which will balance production, increase efficiency as well as reduce the load on the Aquia Aquifer.
- **FDR Boulevard Phase 1C.** The construction of FDR Boulevard was awarded in July 2017 with completion expected within one year. The project was bid as a joint solicitation and under a Memorandum of Understanding with the County. Approximately 1,600 linear feet of new waterline between Old Rolling Road and Kinnegad Drive (*see below*) will be installed as a party of this ongoing expansion and reliability project.



- **FDR Boulevard Phase 3.** The design for this Phase of FDR Boulevard will begin in August 2017, and has been coordinated with the County's roadway construction project. Approximately 9,750 linear feet of new waterline between MD 237 and Pegg Road will be installed in two phases. Design is anticipated to be completed in 6-8 months with construction funding programmed in FY 2019 and FY 2020.
- **Pine Hill Run Interceptor Sewer Rehabilitation.** Design for the rehabilitation and upgrade is 95% completed with bid and award expected by the Fall of 2017. Project includes a capacity upgrade of approximately 1,900 linear feet of existing corroded gravity sewer, built in the late 1960's, from 36 to 42 inch diameter.

- **St. Clements Shores Water System Replacement.** Construction bids for Phase 1 of the replacement of the existing water system originally built in the 1940's were received in March 2017.
- **St. Clements Shores Wastewater Treatment Plant.** The design for Phase A is underway and will allow MetCom to reliably treat and discharge up to 34 new connections consisting of 5 residential properties determined by the Health Department to be failing and 29 properties with allocated EDU's, but have not yet been connected. Construction of Phase A is anticipated to begin in the Fall of 2017.

Other notable projects that were approved as a part of the FY 2018 capital budget process include:

- **Town Creek Water System.** Phase 1 construction funding for replacement of the deteriorating water system that was originally built in the 1950's. Waterlines will be increased from 2 inches to 8 inches in diameter to improve flow, reliability, level of service for domestic and fire use. Design is near completion.
- **St. Clements Shores Wastewater Treatment Plant.** Design funding for Phase B will provide additional disposal capacity at this 33 year old facility and ensure service to approximately 149 customers that are currently on the Plant's waiting list to receive capacity allocations (EDU's). The project will also increase the Plant's flow from 36,250 gallons per day.



St. Clements Shores WWTP: Existing Lagoon

- **Energy Audit.** An energy audit will be conducted by the Maryland Environmental Service to determine if there are any operational efficiencies for upgrade and/or replacement of conventional electrical equipment to more energy-efficient equipment. This includes lighting, pump motors, starters and variable speed drives with the primary goal to reduce operational energy costs.
- **Facilities Conditions Assessment.** An update to the prior 2009 5th and 8th District Facilities Plan will be prepared and should include all other systems in the remaining Districts. This study will evaluate the age and condition of all existing facilities and provide guidance for future capital improvement projects.

SUMMARY OF FY 2017 STATISTICS AND DATA

<u>Description</u>	<u>Number</u>
Wastewater Treatment	
Sewage Treatment Plants	5
Population Served (Estimated)	56,546
Sewage Pumping Stations	64
Residential Grinder Pumps	1,650
Miles of Gravity Sewer Line	149
Miles of Sewer Force Main	118
Sewer Customers	13,332
New Sewer EDUs	155
Gallons Wastewater Conveyed	1.5 Billion
Sewer Main Repairs	16
Grinder Pump Repairs	833
House Connection Repairs	90
Water Distribution	
Water Systems	28
Population Served	60,947
Well Sites	51
Water Towers	18
Miles of Water Line	323
Miles of Water Main	255
Water Meters	15,166
Water Customers	15,581
New Water EDUs	103
Gallons Water Supplied	1.4 Billion
Water Main and Service Line Repairs	53
Valve, Valve Boxes, Hydrant Repairs	41
MDE Permits	
Water / Sewer	43 / 5
Development Review	
Capital Projects	36
Development Submittals	73
Plats	10
Utility Locates	6,964
Connection Permits Issued	209
Employees: Full Time / Contract & Part Time	84 / 8



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