



STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION



PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

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COMMISSIONER

August 18, 2016

Joel C. Moulton, Public Works Director
Town of Eliot
1333 State Road
Eliot, Maine 03903

RE: Town of Eliot pump station upgrade issue

Dear Mr. Moulton,

The condition of the Town of Eliot's two sewage pump stations have come to the Department's attention due to illegal discharges of sewage to waters of the state. These violations resulted in a Letter of Warning (LOW) being issued to the town on April 29, 2015. On July 1, 2015 the Department conducted an inspection of the pump stations and found their reliability to be low, due to their age and condition. "Replacement or significant upgrade of these pump stations..." was the Department's recommendation. To date, no such upgrade or replacement has occurred.

It is my understanding that the town will again be considering funding replacement of these pump stations. The people making this decision should consider the following:

1. The expected design life of a sewage pump station is about 20 years. These pump stations have been in place since 1983 or 33 years. They need to be replaced soon.
2. Older pump stations are less reliable and inefficient, both because they are old and because wastewater technology has improved greatly in the last 3 decades. This is important because pump station failures are expensive, require emergency response by the town to try to prevent illegal discharges and often result in illegal discharges anyway.
3. Because of illegal discharges last year, the Department has put the town on notice that more formal enforcement will result from further illegal discharges. Such an enforcement case would likely result in significant monetary penalties, in addition to replacement of the pump stations.
4. If pump station upgrades are funded and plans are being developed and implemented in a timely fashion, the Department may use enforcement discretion if there are additional illegal discharges

Please contact me at 287-7700, or brian.w.kavanah@maine.gov with any comments or questions.

Sincerely,

Brian Kavanah, Director
Division of Water Quality Management

Cc: Matt Hight, John True - DEP

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