

Effluent Filtration Improvements Project

October 1, 2025

Why This Matters

Resource Renew treats wastewater for our region before it enters Lake Superior, the source of drinking water, recreation, and economic vitality for thousands of Minnesotans.

Our filtration system—last replaced in 2008—has reached the end of its useful life. Without urgent upgrades, harmful pollutants like mercury could exceed permit limits and flow into our waterways.



The current effluent filtration system utilizes a mixed media filter of sand, gravel, and anthracite coal to remove microscopic solids from our community's wastewater.

What's at Stake?

Public Health & Safety:

Mercury and other contaminants pose risks to families, fish, and wildlife.

Economic Growth:

Clean water sustains tourism, industry, and recreation that drive the regional economy.

Legal & Financial Risks:

Noncompliance with federal clean water standards could bring fines, lawsuits, and enforcement actions.

Public Trust:

Communities and businesses rely on reliable, modern infrastructure.

Budget

Total Budget \$40 million

Bonding Request \$20 million



Control panels original to 1978 still exist for the effluent filters.

The brand of
Western Lake Superior
Sanitary District



Benefits of State Investment

Protects Lake Superior and keeps Minnesota a leader in Great Lakes stewardship.

Supports Jobs: Construction and long-term operations create skilled, local employment.

Future-Proofs Infrastructure: A new system will serve the community for the next 30 years.

Aligns with State Priorities: Mercury reduction, water quality protection, and sustainable infrastructure.

The Plan

Stanley Consultants is conducting a comprehensive assessment of filtration options for Resource Renew. Once their evaluation is complete, we will move forward with implementing the recommended 30-year solution. This long-term plan will ensure consistent compliance with strict water quality standards, protect Lake Superior, and modernize outdated systems, including filtration controls that date back to 1978.

Call To Action

Investing now prevents environmental damage, regulatory penalties, and higher costs later. By funding this project, the legislature protects our communities, strengthens our economy, and secures Lake Superior's legacy for generations.



Glossary

Mercury (Hg)

A toxic heavy metal that binds to suspended solids; strict limits are set on how much can be discharged into waterways.

Variance

A temporary regulatory allowance that permits higher pollutant discharges than the standard permit limit, often while new solutions are pursued.

NPDES Permit

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit that sets legal limits on pollutants discharged from facilities into U.S. waters.

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