

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Spring Brings Wastewater Lagoons Turnover and Potential Odors**

**(March 12, 2020 – Belgrade)** The wastewater lagoons serving the City of Belgrade have begun a seasonal turnover event that results in the temporary release of odors.

The odor release results from the warming of lagoon surface layers to approximately 39.2 degrees Fahrenheit, the temperature where water is its densest. Dense surface layers sink, stirring up bottom sediment and forcing lighter, bottom water layers to the surface. The odorous compounds, such as hydrogen sulfide, previously trapped in the bottom sediments are released into the air. The concentrations of these gases are low and are not harmful to the health of area residents.

To address this spring occurrence of odors, City staff are maximizing aeration to minimize odors as much as possible. Beyond this occurrence, the City is in the final stage of design of a major upgrade that will replace lagoon wastewater treatment with mechanical wastewater treatment which will reduce odor emissions in the future. The existing lagoons will remain in place as treated water storage, sludge storage and digestion, and emergency backup storage. Additional aeration is included in the upgrade project to combat odor associated with future turnover events.

The mechanical treatment project is scheduled to be fully functional in 2022. The City asks for the public's patience in the interim.