

## THE WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT: PROCESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Berthoud's Wastewater Treatment Plant is one of the most important systems serving the community. To keep it operating safely, reliably, and in compliance with state regulations, the Town is completing a Wastewater Treatment Process Improvement Project. This project focuses on upgrading how wastewater is treated, improving water quality, protecting the environment, and ensuring the system can support Berthoud's future.

### WHAT IS THE PROCESS IMPROVEMENT PROJECT (PIP)

The Process Improvement Project upgrades how wastewater is treated at Berthoud's Wastewater Treatment Plant by improving the biological treatment process.

This treatment process works in a way that is similar to natural wetlands. In wetlands, water slowly moves through different conditions where natural processes help clean it before it returns to rivers and streams.

The wastewater plant uses the same idea but in a controlled, engineered, and concentrated system. Water moves through a series of treatment zones that create the right conditions for helpful microorganisms to remove pollutants.

This project expands that process by adding a new anaerobic treatment basin, which allows the plant to clean the water more effectively before it is released back into the environment.

These improvements help the plant:

- Remove more nutrients and pollutants from wastewater
- Operate more reliably during daily use and peak flows
- Be better prepared for future regulations and community growth

### HOW THIS PROJECT BENEFITS THE COMMUNITY

#### Cleaner water and environmental protection:

The upgraded treatment process improves the removal of nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus, which can harm rivers and streams if released in high concentrations.

#### **Community benefit:**

- Better protection of the Little Thompson River
- Healthier waterways for recreation, agriculture, and wildlife
- Reduced environmental impacts as Berthoud continues to grow

#### More reliable wastewater service:

As treatment standards increase, older systems become harder to operate consistently. The Process Improvement Project upgrades critical components so the plant can operate more smoothly and predictably.

#### **Community benefit:**

- Fewer operational disruptions
- Reduced risk of emergency repairs
- More dependable service for homes and businesses

#### Preparing for future regulations:

Wastewater regulations continue to become more stringent across Colorado. This project positions Berthoud to meet current requirements and be better prepared for future standards.

#### **Community benefit:**

- Protection of public health

- Avoidance of enforcement actions or penalties
- Reduced likelihood of sudden, large rate increases later

**Smart, planned investment:**

Making targeted improvements now is far more cost-effective than waiting for system failures or being forced into rushed upgrades.

**Community benefit:**

- Lower long-term costs
- Predictable planning instead of crisis spending
- Responsible use of ratepayer dollars

**HOW THIS RELATES TO THE 2026 RATE INCREASE**

The 2026 utility rate adjustment helps fund projects like the Wastewater Treatment Process Improvement Project by covering:

- Construction and equipment costs
- Increased power, chemical, and operational expenses
- Staffing required to operate and maintain an improved treatment system