

## **6 Things to Know About Molalla's New Wastewater Discharge Permit Limits**

- 1. Sewage from Molalla homes and businesses is treated at the Molalla Wastewater Treatment Plant along the Woodburn-Estacada highway.** In summer, the treated effluent is used for agricultural irrigation. In winter, effluent is treated and returned to the Molalla River. High winter flows from rain and snow increase the river's capability to accept treated wastewater.
- 2. Molalla and Oregon DEQ have signed a new agreement to amend the City's wastewater discharge permit.** The permit sets the standard for the concentration of treated water discharged to the river.
- 3. For the last 40 years, Molalla's permit required the City to achieve a standard far more stringent than EPA and DEQ guidelines.** While most other wastewater utilities have a biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) limit of 30 mg/L (milligrams per liter), Molalla's limit was 10 mg/L.
- 4. Despite costly upgrades to the City's wastewater plant and equipment, Molalla could not consistently meet this strict standard,** leading to permit violations and fines.
- 5. DEQ and the City of Molalla collaborated over the past two years to determine what limit would best protect the river's ecosystem.** Using a data-driven approach, DEQ approved a limit of 25 mg/L and increased the monthly, weekly and daily loading limit requirements.
- 6. The new permit limit benefits the environment and Molalla ratepayers:**
  - Protects the environment.
  - Can consistently be met by the City of Molalla.
  - Will eliminate DEQ fines and costly lawsuits, lowering long-term rates for sewer customers.