About the CMOM Program Self Assessment Checklist

Introduction

A sanitary sewer collection system is a vital element of any community's infrastructure and a critical component of the wastewater treatment process. The nation's sanitary sewer infrastructure has been built over the last 100 years or more using a variety of materials, design standards, installation techniques, and maintenance practices. As this valuable infrastructure ages, the importance of preventive and predictive maintenance increases.

What is CMOM?

CMOM stands for "capacity, management, operations, and maintenance." It is a flexible, dynamic framework for municipalities to identify and incorporate widely-accepted wastewater industry practices to:

- Better manage, operate, and maintain collection systems
- Investigate capacity constrained areas of the collection system
- Respond to sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) events

The CMOM approach helps municipal wastewater utility operators provide a high level of service to customers and reduce regulatory noncompliance. CMOM can help utilities optimize use of human and material resources by shifting maintenance activities from "reactive" to "predictive"–often leading to cost savings through avoided overtime, emergency construction costs, increased insurance premiums, and the possibility of lawsuits. CMOM information and documentation can also help improve communications with the public, other municipal works and regional planning organizations, and regulators.

In CMOM planning, the utility selects performance goal targets, and designs CMOM activities to meet the goals. The CMOM planning framework covers operation and maintenance (O&M) planning, capacity assessment and assurance, capital improvement planning, and financial management planning. Information collection and management practices are used to track how well each CMOM activity is meeting the performance goals, and whether overall system efficiency is improving. On an ongoing basis, activities are reviewed and adjusted to better meet the performance goals. As the CMOM program progresses, performance goals can change. For instance, an initial goal may be to develop a geographic information system (GIS) of the system. Once the GIS is complete, a new goal might be to use the GIS to track emergency calls and use the information to improve maintenance planning.

An important component of a successful CMOM program is to periodically collect information on current systems and activities and develop a "snapshot-in-time" analysis. From this analysis, the utility establishes its performance goals and plans its CMOM program activities.

Additional information describing CMOM can be found at: www.epa.gov/npdes/sso or www.epa.gov/region4/water/wpeb/pdfs/self-audit_review2-3.pdf.

Exhibit 3.1

About this Checklist (Continued)

What is the purpose of the CMOM program checklist?

This document is a screening-level tool that can help utilities evaluate CMOM programs and identify general areas of strength and weakness. Completing this CMOM assessment will allow the utility to flag CMOM program areas that need improvement and establish priorities for additional, more detailed assessments. In addition, the checklist will allow the utility to compare annual performance (e.g., percent of employees meeting training standards).

This document is not intended to be all-inclusive. It addresses the types of practices EPA believes should be considered by most utilities when implementing a CMOM program. However, the ways in which utilities use the information gathered through the checklist will depend on the complexity and site-specific issues facing individual collection systems. When reviewing the questions, utilities should use their judgment to determine if the question is reasonable for their collection system size and design.

How do I use this checklist?

The questions on the checklist will request answers in three different formats:

- Check yes, no, or not applicable (NA),
- Fill in the blank, and
- Check all that apply.

At the end of each section, additional space is provided to allow for comments on or explanations of the answers recorded (information that will be useful to the utility in follow-on planning). Each utility should make an effort to answer all the questions that are applicable to its system. If a particular question takes a significant amount of time to answer, this could be an indication of an area of weakness. Utilities should plan to invest approximately one day to complete the checklist.

This document is designed to help utilities perform an initial evaluation of CMOM activities. **It is not intended to serve as an absolute indicator of a successful CMOM program, nor will all of the questions apply to every utility.** By working through these questions, utilities will be able to identify strengths and areas for improvements in their CMOM programs. If a utility has a significant number of "no" answers or very few items selected in the checklist, this could indicate an area of weakness. The utility manager then can make a more detailed evaluation, including identifying specific actions needed to address areas for improvement.