HOME BREWER OUTGROWS GARAGE

Lawson’s Finest Liquids is a Mad River Valley brewery established in 2008 after homemaker Sean Lawson’s beers became a phenomenon, commanding long lines at his makeshift garage-brewery. After establishing a contract arrangement at an out-of-state brewery, he planned his next step – a brewery and taproom located in the Mad River Valley where his famous homemaker was first created. A site at Waitsfield’s Winter Park was chosen.

Our firm provided:
- evaluation of pre-treatment alternatives
- permitting, including indirect discharge permit
- pre-treatment system design
- design/build processes
- SCADA process design, specification, control panel fabrication and installation
- automated flow and pH monitoring

BREWERY WASTEWATER CHALLENGES

Brewery process wastewater is extremely high strength, and some breweries discharge their wastewater at two orders of magnitude stronger than domestic wastewater. Without pre-treatment, discharge of brewery wastewater to an onsite disposal field can result in premature failure due to the high Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD). The Mad River Valley comprises poor soils, high groundwater, and steep slopes, which are not well suited for disposal fields. Winter Park was built with a 9,000 gallon-per-day disposal field on one of the few flat, dry sites in the area with sufficient space. This critical resource needs stringent protection, or the field will prematurely fail, imperiling several businesses including the local lumber yard and movie theater.

MEETING AND EXCEEDING THE OWNER’S NEEDS

- Provided an effective treatment system to discharge process wastewater, currently exceeding performance goals

NEW APPLICATIONS OF EXISTING TECHNIQUES

- Integrated two treatment technologies into one system, and provided a process configuration maximizing operational flexibility

SOCIAL/ECONOMIC CONSIDERATIONS

- Project allowed a local business to remain in its community
- Protects community disposal field in an area with limited soil capacity

COMPLEXITY

- Maintained operation of existing treatment system during construction
- Allows for wide range of wastewater flow quantity and quality to be processed

TECHNICAL VALUE TO THE PROFESSION

- Demonstrates the ability of a large-scale brewery to dispose of their wastewater in a location without a municipal WWTF

PRE-TREATMENT KEEPS BEER LOCAL

LAWSON’S FINEST LIQUIDS BREWERY · WAITSFIELD, VT

American Council of Engineering Companies
Vermont Section
2020 Engineering Excellence Awards
Entry Category E: Special Projects