

As you know, the Governor's Water and Sewer Task Force Report included a number of recommendations that will require some kind of action by the Legislature. These are listed below.

- Training requirements should be instituted for the board members of all water and wastewater systems and for the publicly elected local officials responsible for the management of publicly-owned or operated water and wastewater systems.
- Economic viability determinations should be performed by the Mississippi Public Utility Staff on new water and wastewater systems to assure that the user charge system (the formulas that are used to determine the rates customers pay) is adequate to repay debt, operate and maintain the system, and be able to provide for emergency repairs.
- The Commission on Environmental Quality and the State Board of Health (with the concurrence of governmental lending agencies) should be authorized to petition a chancery court to have a chronically malfunctioning domestic wastewater system or public water supply system which is endangering public health or the environment placed into receivership under the continuing jurisdiction of the court.
- Certification of wastewater collection system operators should be required.
- The Legislature should provide the full state match for the Clean Water SRF program and for the Safe Drinking Water SRF program.
- A program should be developed which will provide money for loan subsidies, so that the resulting water or wastewater system will be affordable by the customers of the system.
- The Mississippi Public Service Commission should be given the authority to include the cost of fire protection in the rate structure when requested by a water system.
- The existing individual on-site wastewater system (septic tank) law should be amended to address concerns raised by the Governor's Water and Sewer Task Force.
- Consideration should be given to developing an environmental fee program to partially fund MDEQ's operations.
- A revolving fund loan program should be created or the Mississippi Development Authority's Capital Improvements Revolving Loan Program should be modified to provide loans for water and wastewater infrastructure development in publicly-owned industrial parks. The loan program should be managed by the Mississippi Development Authority.