UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

APR 1 1 2014

Darryl Smalls, Commissioner
U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Public Works
8244 Sub Base, St. Thomas
Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands 00802-5805

Dear Mr. Smalls:

This is in response to your request to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for a Categorical Exclusion (CATEX) from substantive environmental review requirements, pursuant to 40 CFR Part 6, for your sewer manhole rehabilitation and chemical injection system replacement project located in the Bethlehem area of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands. The Department of Public Works is seeking operational and structural assessment funds through the federal construction grant program.

A portion of a sanitary sewer collection system in the vicinity of the Central High School and Virgin Island Superior Courthouse is generating severe odors from raw wastewater, which has created a public health emergency requiring action. The sewer collection system problems consist of sewer blockages, lack of raw wastewater pre-treatment, and severely degraded sewer manhole structures that are part of either the Barren Spot force main or gravity sewer line. Additionally, a chemical injection system inside the Barren Spot Pump Station that used to pre-treat raw wastewater has not been operational for more than two years and needs to be replaced to assist with reducing odors and corrosion inside sewer infrastructures, including manholes.

This project consists of four main elements to address the severe odors from the sewer collection system:

- Rehabilitate four manholes on the VI Superior Court property (manholes MH-1 through MH-4).
- Replace a transition manhole connected with the Herbert Grigg sewer line and rehabilitate another transition manhole connected with the Barren Spot force main.
- Rehabilitate four manholes that are part of the Barren Spot gravity sewer line just west of the VI Superior Court within an easement off of Centerline Road adjacent to an open field area (manholes MH-5, MH-6, MH-7 and MH-9).
- Replace a chemical injection system unit and associated mechanical, structural, instrumental, and electrical components at the Barron Spot Pump Station. Additionally, a new chemical storage tank will be installed on a concrete slab with associated new piping, valves, and injection pump with power and instrumentation controls. Sampling and laboratory testing will be conducted prior to placing the chemical injection system into full operation.

Before any manhole rehabilitation or replacement work is initiated, an internal camera/television inspection will be performed on the manhole interior. The rehabilitation of the sewer manhole system will consist of interior cleaning followed by repairs to the manholes involving epoxy coating, reinforcing concrete walls, and providing new covers. However, if a manhole structure cannot be repaired or rehabilitated, then full replacement(s) may be necessary requiring further roadway excavation activities followed by re-pavement.

Completing this project will reduce wastewater odors and extend the useful life of the manhole structures within the Bethlehem sewer collection system.

The project meets the CATEX eligibility criteria found in 6.204(a)(l)(ii). This category includes "actions relating to existing infrastructure systems (such as sewer systems, drinking water supply systems, and stormwater systems, including combined sewer overflow systems) that involve minor upgrading, or minor expansion of system capacity or rehabilitation (including functional replacement) of the existing system and system components (such as the sewer collection network and treatment system; the system to collect, treat, store and distribute drinking water; and stormwater systems, including combined sewer overflow systems) or construction of new minor ancillary facilities adjacent to or on the same property as existing facilities."

This project does not involve a new or relocated discharge to surface or ground water, an increase in the volume or loading of pollutants to receiving water, or capacity to serve a population 30 percent greater than the existing population. Further, it is not contrary to any state or regional growth plan or strategy; and it is not primarily for the purpose of future development.

Additionally, the available information you provided concerning the proposed action indicates that none of the specific criteria for not granting a CATEX, found in 40 CFR 6.204(b)(1) through (b)(10), are present.

Based on our review, EPA approves the request for the CATEX. Please be reminded that EPA may revoke this CATEX if any of the following conditions occur:

-changes in the proposed action render it ineligible for exclusion,
-new evidence indicates that serious local or environmental issues exist, or
-federal, state, or local laws would be violated.

This CATEX will be available on the EPA website at http://www.epa.gov/region02/spmm/r2nepa.htm.

Should you have any questions regarding this decision, please address them to Grace Musumeci, Chief, Environmental Review Section, at the above address.

Sincerely,

Judith A. Enck

Judith A. Enck
Regional Administrator

cc: May Adams Cornwall, P.E., Executive Director, WMA
Laurie Williams, Director of Engineering, WMA
James Grum, P.E., Chief Engineer, WMA
Tawana Albany Nicholas, Engineer, WMA
Jomo McClean, Chief Engineer, DPW

Commissioner Smalls, Please prioritize this work. Thank you.