

# GLUA FAQ



The following is a summary of frequently asked questions. Additional information can be found at the Townships' websites:  
<http://lyontownship.org/GLUA-Sewer-Info>      <https://gerrishtownship.org/>

- **Is a wastewater treatment system really necessary?**

**The Central Michigan District Health Department estimates that up to “68 percent of the 4,300 homes and business in the proposed service area would not meet one or more requirements of the current sanitary code.”**

Without the establishment of proper sewer collection and treatment around Higgins Lake, the area will continue to experience declining water quality in the lake and drinking water wells leading to decreased property values and recreation opportunities.

On-site private septic systems lack the capacity to effectively treat sewage from the residential and limited commercial users around the lake due to the excessively drained soils, proximity to lake, and high groundwater table. The nutrients from septic systems are carried via the effluent into the groundwater and eventually Higgins Lake. This issue is exacerbated by the intense seasonal use and density of the systems around the area. This also poses a potential health and safety issue for nearby shallow private water supply wells.

Over the past 50 years, starting in 1969, nearly 20 water quality and sewer feasibility studies and reports have been conducted for the Higgins Lake area. These studies have demonstrated decreasing water quality in Higgins Lake and identified existing septic systems as a major contributor.

- **What kind of sewer system is proposed?**

A low-pressure septic tank effluent pumping (STEP) system is proposed. STEP systems consist of water-tight septic tank located in place of a conventional septic tank with the effluent being pumped to a treatment facility. The pump is located in the storage tank and collectively the pumps convey wastewater to the treatment facility. Pumping the effluent without solids increases system efficiency and reduces the costs for system cleaning.

- **What happens to the solids?**

Solids are to be pumped from the storage tank on an as needed basis (approximately 7-10 years). Solids are then hauled to the wastewater treatment plant for further processing.

- **Is my property included in the sewer service area?**

An interactive map of the proposed sewer system service area can be found here:

<https://fveng.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=f98e9b84e0c24bc3bc80373167914686>

A link is provided on the Lyon and Gerrish Township websites. You can also contact the Lyon or Gerrish Township office if you have questions regarding your specific parcel.

- **Where is the proposed land for the treatment plant?**

The proposed Wastewater Treatment Plant Location is located east of US 127 on the northwest corner of County Rd 104 and N Harrison Rd (Old 27).

- **What is the total cost of the sewer project?**

The current estimated cost of the project is \$130 million.

- **How will the sewer project be funded?**

The Gerrish - Lyon Utility Authority is pursuing funding through USDA Rural Development, as well as other state and federal subsidized funding programs.

- **What is the cost to the property owner?**

There are two components to the cost to the property owners: 1. Operations, Maintenance, and Replacement costs and 2. Capital costs. The cost to each property owner and payment structure will be determined as part of the Special Assessment process.

- **What is the responsibility of the homeowner to hook up?**

Each homeowner will be responsible for the connection of their existing plumbing system to the new STEP tank and for the cost to provide 120-volt power supply from their existing electric panel to the STEP Pump control panel, mounted to the outside of the home.

- **Who is responsible for maintenance?**

**GLUA:**

- Septic Tanks
- Pumps
- Force mains
- Wastewater Treatment Facility

**Homeowner:**

- Service line from home to septic tank
- Electrical service to STEP System control panel

- **Will there be financing assistance available for the homeowner?**

Payment assistance programs may be available to qualifying households. Additional information will be posted on the Township websites.

- **When is construction planned to start and time frame for completion?**

Pending approval of funding, construction of the project is anticipated to begin in 2023 and be completed by 2026.

- **Is there a current septic tank replacement that will be compatible with the STEP System?**

Detailed specifications for septic tank replacements that are compatible with the STEP system have been provided to the Township offices and are available on the Township websites to any homeowner that needs to replace their septic tank prior to the construction of the sewer system.

- **Will my existing septic tank be removed?**

Existing septic tanks will be removed or cleaned out and demolished in place depending on site specific constraints.

- **Do I have to hook up to the sewer?**

The GLUA sewer use ordinance will require homeowners within the service area to connect to the sewer system.