



PRESS RELEASE

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**City of St. Cloud is the Recipient of a National EPA Award for
Innovative Financing**

Innovation > Improvement > Excellence

The City of St. Cloud's Nutrient & Energy Recovery Project was selected for the 2020 PISCES Exceptional Project Award. St. Cloud's Project was 1 of 5 in the nation selected for this level of recognition. St. Cloud was the selected winner of the PISCES Award for the Innovative Financing category.

The PISCES Program nationally recognizes exceptional projects that are funded by the federal Clean Water Revolving Fund Program. The Clean Water Revolving Fund Program provides grants and low-interest financing options for municipal projects related to improvements to water quality, public health, economic development and projects that help meet national and state sustainability goals.

The City partnered with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), Minnesota Public Facilities Authority (MPFA), and local businesses to design, finance and construct the Nutrient & Energy Recovery Project. The City received a low-interest loan and \$6.6 million in grant funds for the project. This is the first Minnesota project in history to receive a PISCES Exceptional Project Award.

The project consisted of the installation of new innovative equipment and processes to recover valuable nutrients as biofertilizer products and to enable the conversion of waste to energy onsite. As a result of this project, the City's Nutrient, Energy & Water Recovery Facility now produces more energy than it consumes on-site from renewable energy sources including solar and biofuel. St. Cloud is the first facility in the State of Minnesota to achieve energy neutrality status. This results in significant operational savings, revenue generation opportunities, cleaner waters and a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions.

"We are proud of the exceptional services we provide to our customers and residents, we do so in a sustainable and cost-effective manner. Many people think greener is more expensive, we are an example of where greener is cheaper," said Mayor Dave Kleis. "We would like to thank the EPA for this recognition, we are truly honored and proud to accept this award."

The City has established strong partnerships with both the MPCA and MPFA, who were vital for the success of this project. "Nominating the City of St. Cloud for the PISCES award was a no-brainer for the state," says Aaron Luckstein with the MPCA. "Their model for success starts with a change in traditional thinking. Instead of viewing pollutants like nutrients as a waste, they view them as a resource and strive to determine innovative ways to not only use the resource but to maximize the use of it. Their systems thinking approach allows the City to enhance their infrastructure, and protect our land and water, all while keeping user rates low for residents and businesses."

The City of St. Cloud's Nutrient, Energy & Water Recovery Facility is a state and national leader in innovation within the wastewater treatment industry, the facility has been recognized internationally as well. "The success of this project is a result of progressive, dedicated, passionate city staff members who are continually looking at ways to improve through innovative processes and technologies. The team is constantly looking at ways to improve the level of services we provide in the most cost-effective way possible," said Tracy Hodel, Public Services Director.

For more information about the City of St. Cloud's Nutrient, Energy & Water Recovery Facility and the PISCES award visit <https://ci.stcloud.mn.us/331/Wastewater-Services>, <https://www.epa.gov/cwsrf/pisces> or call Tracy Hodel at 320-650-2815.