



Portland Water District  
FROM SEBAGO LAKE TO CASCO BAY

# Industrial Pretreatment Newsletter Issue 1: Pretreatment Introduction

Pretreatment can be challenging! We hope this newsletter provides helpful information to support your industrial pretreatment efforts.



The Clean Water Act was passed in 1970 with a broad goal that all waters of the United States should be swimmable and fishable. In an effort to reach this goal, thousands of municipal wastewater treatment plants (WW plants) were constructed around the country. These WW plants - such as PWD's facilities in Westbrook (pictured) and Portland - are designed



to treat the kind of wastewater that comes from homes and offices - known as sanitary wastewater. And that's mostly what flows through the sewers to those plants.

The cities and towns of Greater Portland also include manufacturing facilities and other industrial businesses that generate wastewater which is very unlike sanitary wastewater. Depending on the type of industry, industrial wastewater can be high in arsenic, oil and grease, biochemical oxygen demand and more. If these contaminants are allowed to flow untreated into our WW plants, they could damage the sewers, upset plant operation, endanger the health of wastewater workers, and/or flow through the plants without receiving enough treatment. When these things happen, they can pollute receiving waters, kill fish and wildlife, or endanger residents near these bodies of water.

## The key elements of PWD's IPT programs are:

- Identifying businesses that should be in the program.
- Issuing and renewing discharge permits.
- Annual inspections of industrial users in the program.
- Sampling of industrial wastewater.
- Responding to problems when they occur.



Photo by Claire Crocker

To prevent industrial wastes from causing environmental harm, the Clean Water Act created Industrial Pretreatment (or IPT) Programs. The IPT concept is simple: ensure that industrial wastewater doesn't harm the treatment works or treatment workers and doesn't pollute the receiving waters. Having an IPT program is a condition of PWD's permit to operate the treatment plants, and the State Department of Environmental Protection provides oversight to our efforts to ensure

we meet all of our permit requirements. Meeting these goals is a challenging process. We are preparing this newsletter in an effort to provide you with useful information about industrial pretreatment. In the end, the Portland Water District's goal is to support thriving business and industry in our communities while we work together to ensure that Casco Bay and the Presumpscot River (shown above) remain swimmable, fishable and enjoyable.

We will go into more detail about each of the IPT program elements listed above in subsequent issues of this newsletter. For more information you can also visit our pretreatment web page at [www.pwd.org/industrial-pretreatment](http://www.pwd.org/industrial-pretreatment).

We welcome any and all feedback about this effort to make the IPT program easier to understand. You can reach us at [pretreatment@pwd.org](mailto:pretreatment@pwd.org).

