

NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA

Long-standing environmental partnership weathers Hurricane Katrina, saves \$35 million



“This partnership has continuously saved taxpayers money and delivered high environmental compliance.”

– Mayor Mitch Landrieu



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Contract Facts

378,000
population served

Since 1992
services provided

Wastewater
O&M

30%
of partnership revenues through
local economically disadvantaged
business partners

\$1 million
contributed to community and
civic groups

\$35 million
In overall savings

Scope

Veolia, in partnership with the Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans (S&WB), began operating, maintaining and managing (O&M) the city's two wastewater treatment plants in 1992. Veolia manages all aspects of facility O&M, and supports capital improvements, septage receiving and biosolids disposal. In 2015, the partnership was renewed for another 10 years.

Challenge

In addition to being one of the largest wastewater partnerships in the U.S., the S&WB and Veolia also maintain wastewater infrastructure in a city located below sea level. Despite the geographic disadvantage, Veolia and the S&WB restored primary and secondary wastewater treatment services within 60 days of Hurricane Katrina and have implemented \$1.7 million capital improvements. Veolia continues to ensure operations run smoothly throughout the resiliency-boosting rehabilitation projects.

Solution

Since Katrina, the S&WB has allocated \$739 million for wastewater system recovery projects, representing the most aggressive and important rebuilding effort in the utility's 110-year history. Veolia and the S&WB have made a number of upgrades to prevent destructive flooding, improve resiliency and protect environmental health. The East Bank facility now boasts 18-foot tall flood walls to keep water out and waterproof doors to protect vital systems. The plant is also equipped with a back-up energy supply, an additional control center and a new administrative building elevated on stilts.

Result

Together, the S&WB and Veolia have generated more than \$35 million in savings and the partnership has been recognized with numerous awards. As part of the 10-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina in 2015—and in support of continuous efforts to be more prepared in a future emergency—the City of New Orleans announced a first-ever comprehensive resiliency strategy that calls for development of a comprehensive stormwater management program and creation of a resiliency center. As a partner to New Orleans and the Rockefeller Foundation, Veolia contributed to the resiliency strategy and roadmap by helping the city implement a resilient infrastructure recovery program.

