

Key-note address for the theme of the seminar

“Cost Effective Measures in the Field of Sanitation”

1. It is a common knowledge that the State Government has undertaken a big programme of underground sewerage projects. IWWA is involved in many ways with the programme and felt that it will be appropriate to select a theme related to this mammoth task.
2. It is a policy all over the country that the urban local body will be entrusted the management of the project on completion. They formulate by-laws, decide tax structure, operate and maintain the system. If the status of water supply systems, so essential compared sewerage, is any indication, extreme caution is warranted to see that the huge investment in the sewerage projects provides the desired benefits to the community.
3. The first step in this direction will be a technical design that will give trouble free service with normal maintenance. The project should be most economical in the capital cost.
4. Second step will be to prepare a project that needs minimum energy and man-power inputs in normal operation. Costs of energy and man-power are surely going to have an upward trend all the time and as such its quantum must be kept to the minimum.
5. Also there are quite a few cost effective options to the conventional sewerage system particularly for relatively smaller communities. Examples are shallow sewers, small-bore sewers, decentralized on-site disposal systems, etc. These are simpler and very economical options not only in initial investment but in operation also.
6. When stakes are big, all options should be diligently evaluated and prudent decision should be taken in each case. Conventional systems are not necessarily suitable in every case.
7. While designing a sewer system, the layout should be such that there are minimum pumping stations. Each pumping station needs operating staff and consumes energy. Even pumping machinery should be chosen in such a way that it works near best efficiency point of its characteristic curve. Automation in operation will reduce the need of man-power.
8. Most worrying aspect is the operation by urban local body. There are number of water treatment plants that are not properly maintained as local authority says that they have no money to buy chemicals like alum and chlorine. Even the equipments are not repaired for years and the raw water just passes through the plant and supplied to people. It will therefore be necessary to give some maintenance grants in the beginning so that their finances can adjust to the new burden over a time.

We venture to suggest that a completed project should have a trial run of about two years to ensure a trouble free operation thereafter. During this time efforts should be made to After handing over to local body, in the first year full grant should be given and then there should be a reduction by 20% every year provided the system is maintained properly. First charge should be energy bill that should paid directly out of the payable grant. The account of the system-maintenance should be audited prior to payment of the grant. There should be a statutory provision for the ULB to make adequate budgetary allocation. If for the first 5-6 years this exercise is done, the ULB will adjust itself and in most of the cases maintenance of reasonable level will be done subsequently. It is of course a policy matter for which some decisions at Government level will be necessary.

9. This in short is a thought process that went into selecting the theme for today's seminar. We hope that there will be meaningful contribution from this august audience by way of discussions and suggestions.
10. I wish this seminar a success.

— K. G. Dave