

ARLINGTON COUNTY WATER POLLUTION CONTROL PLANT

Let It Flow!



National Environmental
Achievement
AWARDS

NEAA26 PUBLIC INFORMATION & EDUCATION: EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM



What do wastewater, art, and carnival games have in common? Public outreach, of course!

This colorful carnival game built specifically for Arlington by artist Scott Pennington educates the public on their role in protecting our pipes and wastewater treatment equipment.

How to play Let It Flow!

- 1 Players get a set of bean bags labeled with commonly misdisposed items.
- 2 Then, players must figure out the right disposal method for each item: sink, toilet, trash can, or compost bin.
- 3 But the real fun is in trying to “dispose” of it properly!



Watch a video!





SECTION 4: MEMBER SPOTLIGHT (300–400 WORDS)

Across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C., Arlington County, Virginia is home to about 240,000 residents. Arlington’s Water Pollution Control Plant treats 23 million gallons of wastewater each day while meeting the stringent standards that protect the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

The County’s Water Pollution Control Bureau (WPCB) is advancing Arlington Re-Gen, a major capital improvement program that will modernize aging infrastructure and enhance the plant’s ability to recover valuable resources from wastewater. Construction is scheduled to begin in late 2025.

Arlington Re-Gen will replace outdated solids-handling systems with state-of-the-art technology that improves energy efficiency while advancing the County’s vision of being a sustainable community. When complete, the upgraded facility will produce Class A biosolids, a nutrient-rich, pathogen-free product that can be safely used as fertilizer in parks, gardens, and agricultural settings. The project will also strengthen the County’s capacity to recover renewable energy, reduce its carbon footprint, and support long-term environmental and operational resilience.

Alongside infrastructure investment, Arlington continues to emphasize public education and community engagement as vital components of its work. The County develops creative outreach initiatives that help residents understand how wastewater treatment works and how everyday choices—like what gets flushed—affect local waterways.

As Arlington Re-Gen begins construction, this focus on outreach is more important than ever. One example is Let It Flow!, a carnival-style educational game created with the Arlington Art Truck. The interactive exhibit invites players to sort common household items into the proper disposal method, sparking conversations about what belongs in the trash, the sink, or the toilet. By meeting people where they are, the game turns a perennial wastewater challenge into a fun, memorable learning experience.