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# Cost of sewer plant increases

**Town estimates regional wastewater plant to cost 30 percent more than originally budgeted.**

**BY BETH HATCHER**  
STAFF WRITER

Though slightly delayed, a regional wastewater treatment plant handling Cary's needs is slated to come online in about five years.

The delays, mostly due to permitting issues, have also increased the price tag of the Western Wake Regional Water Reclamation Facility, currently estimated at \$300 million.

That price is a 30 percent increase in estimated cost for the project in the last four years, said Steve Brown, Cary's director of public works and utilities.

The delays in the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers project caused the price to go up because globally, construction costs are going up thanks to increased demand

and rising fuel prices, Brown said.

The project will treat wastewater from Cary, Apex, Holly Springs and Research Triangle Park.

The project is 60 percent designed and in the site selection process.

Officials know the facility will be located somewhere in southwestern Wake County.

Some residents in that area — called the New Hill community — have long been against the proposed project.

"We're adamantly opposed to putting it right in the middle of the community," said Randel Sink on Monday.

Sink is a 60-year-old retired electrical engineer who has lived in New Hill since 1974.

Brown said that the New Hill area is the most cost-effective location for the plant since it is in a direct line from where it receives the water to where it will discharge it into the Cape Fear River.

Brown said the facility, which will treat 18 million gallons a day, could come online in 2013.

The communities that make up Western Wake Partners will shoulder the cost according to

how much of the plant's capacity they will use, Brown said.

Cary will use 10.5 million gallons a day. The cost will be paid for partly through bond funds.

"We have common goals," Brown said of the reasons the different municipalities decided to come together for the joint project.

Cary Mayor Harold Weinbrecht believes more such municipal cooperation will be seen in the future.

"There is more emphasis on regionalism now," Weinbrecht said.

Cary already has two wastewater treatment plants, one in north Cary off Old Reedy Creek Road and one in south Cary off West Lake Road which have a combined treatment capacity of 24.8 million gallons a day.

Like those facilities, the new plant will use a biological process to treat the water by producing environments ripe for bacteria and other micro-organisms to grow in.

The organisms will then eat the "bad" stuff from the water before it's filtered, Brown said.

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## WATER

FROM PAGE 1A

Cary's booming population that will push the town's average daily water demand from 14 million gal-