Marc Drainville, GHD - The Sewering of an Entire Town: How Chatham, Massachusetts is Planning to Gain Complete Control of its Wastewater in order to Protect Drinking Water Supplies and Restore the Marine Environment

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The United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) have recently implemented non-point-source, watershed-based nitrogen Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) limits for multiple small coastal estuaries around Cape Cod Massachusetts. The TMDLs for the four (4) estuarine systems around the Town of Chatham, Massachusetts, a town with a population of approximately 6,500, are very stringent and require removal of much of the wastewater nitrogen coming from the many individual septic systems, as well as nitrogen from the stormwater and lawn fertilizers, at the many developed properties. Nutrients have been overloading the local estuaries for years causing highly visible eutrophication issues as well as impacts to the groundwater-source drinking water supply. The Town developed a Comprehensive Wastewater Management Plan (CWMP) which utilizes sewer extensions, a wastewater treatment facility upgrade, growth neutral land use controls, stormwater management, and fertilizer reduction research and management to meet the limits.