

ADKOM's bulletin

September – December 2020

A wastewater treatment plant is becoming a reality for the City of Skopje, it is an investment in the environment and the future generations



Dushko Veskovski, Photo credit: Maja Janevska – Ilieva

Interview with Dushko Veskovski,

General Manager of the PUC “Vododov I Kanalizacija” – Skopje (“Water Supply and Sewerage”)

In the interview for the newspaper “Nova Makedonija”, the General Manager of the PUC “Vododov I Kanalizacija” talked about all the challenges of 2020, as well as about the projects that marked the year. Also, we discussed about the business and the organization in the past year and the pandemics that brought upon new, different, working conditions.

• Which project would you say was the most important in 2020?

The project that marked 2020 was the construction of the Wastewater Treatment Plant – Skopje. Starting with the im-

plementation of this project is of crucial and vital importance for the City of Skopje and its citizens. It is an investment in the environment, but also in the future generations. The Wastewater Treatment Plant – Skopje is a project that after 15 years is becoming a reality for the City of Skopje, it is environmentally considered to be a capital project, with a capacity equivalent to 500,000 population, and a value estimated to 136 million euros; it should provide treatment of urban waters in accordance with the EU standards and will contribute to the reduction of pollution of the river Vardar, improved environmental conditions, and also to the improvement of the quality of life of the citizens of Skopje. With the construction of the wastewater treatment plant our country will have 90% treated waters, which is one of the criteria that needs to be met for the opening of negotiations with EU. The project as such has been recognized here, but also in Europe, and as proof for that is that it was included in the Action plan for a green city by the City of Skopje and the support from the Government, the Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, the Ministry of Finance, the City of Skopje, EBOR, EIB and the EU Delegation. Another acknowledgement for the

importance of the project is the second prize in the category of climate renewal and sustainability, in competition with 47 nominations, out of which 16 companies from 11 countries in the world were selected as winners of the sustainability awards for 2020, in the competition organized by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

● **Professionally, how do you evaluate 2020?**

Despite all the unknowns and challenges, from a professional point of view, 2020 was extremely successful year. During this year, we were able to observe the results from the efforts of past years, and, we managed, despite all odds, to open new chapters, to complete the already started projects, and to start new ones. I am especially pleased about the fact that we managed to change the perception of the public on the operations and effectiveness of the public companies concerning their main activities, but also in the application of the positive practices for socially responsible goals. Namely, in the past period, we assumed a strategic and planned approach to realizing investments in all sectors of the PUC "Vodovod i Kanalizacija". In 2020 alone, we invested in the reconstruction and construction of a new water supply network, over 20km long, and a new sewerage network over 7km long, in order to improve and renew the water supply and sewerage network and to create conditions for uninterrupted water supply and disposal of urban wastewaters for all consumers. In accordance with the needs for increased mobility, effectiveness, and efficiency in the discharging our activities, we renewed the vehicle fleet and the mechanization with machines, specialized vehicles and equipment. One of the main activities of PUC "Water and Sewerage" - Skopje is providing clean and healthy drinking water to every consumer, and here the key role is played by the Sector for Sanitary Control, whose laboratories were the first in the country to standardize their work in accordance with ISO 17025. For the needs of the Sector for Sanitary Control, new equipment was procured, which improved the processes for performing chemical and microbiological analyzes for testing the quality of drinking water. As we are living in a time of digitalization and we are following the trends of the new times, as well as the needs of the consumers, we became the first public utility company in this field that launched a mobile application that is available for Android and iOS.

In addition, we enabled our website to offer e-services to the citizens. By digitalizing the services, we have provided for a greater availability and easier access for the citizens. As we take into consideration all categories of consumers, we set up toll booths at several locations in the city, and of course there are collection points and the on-duty information centre. With the intention of bringing the company closer to the European companies, we continuously standardize our operations. So far, the certification and accreditation of ISO 9001, HASAP, ISO 14001, ISO 17020 and ISO 17025 has been confirmed.

● **You mentioned the social responsibility, and recently the PUC "Water Supply and Sewerage" - Skopje received an award from the "SOS Children's Village" for encouraging individual philanthropy. What are your experiences and impressions?**

Yes. Applying positive practices for socially responsible goals is also one of the activities that are in the focus of the of PUC "Water and Sewerage" - Skopje. We all have a responsibility in creating a society in which we and future generations would want to live. As the experience shows, with our work we are actually changing the perception of the public utility companies in terms of applying socially responsible practices. Namely, PUC "Water Supply and Sewerage" - Skopje is the first company that fully uses environmentally friendly biodegradable recycled pa-

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per for printing invoices, which last year we used to send out to our consumers messages on how to protect the environment. This is a campaign that we are jointly implementing in cooperation with "Pakomak", with the intention of raising the awareness of the citizens for environmental protection. In addition, in the past period we have conducted several campaigns to raise awareness for the protection of the water supply and sewerage system and the environment in general. Every day we witness the consequences of climate changes in the world, but also in our country. Having in mind the fact that we use and drink water from a natural source, Rasche, and having in mind the need for its protection, in cooperation with the Budapest water supply system, we started a development of a joint project to reduce water losses and tackle climate change. This project is in its implementation stage and it is funded by a grant from VBGC. And the cooperation with the "SOS Children's Village" is a cooperation of which we are really proud and we are emotionally connected. The recognition for encouraging individual philanthropy in 2020, which we received from the "SOS Children's Village", on the occasion of the International Day of Human Solidarity, is an acknowledgment for our selfless support as the first public utility company to get involved in supporting the mission of "SOS Children's Village", which provides care for children and youth without parents and parental care. This cooperation started just before the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, but in a short period of time we managed to realize more activities and to influence the spreading and encouragement of individual philanthropy, with the messages sent with the invoices in printed and electronic form.

● **Having in mind the COVID-19 pandemic, how were the operations of your company affected, in terms of reduced staff etc.?**

Unfortunately, we had to confront the COVID-19 pandemic. Like the rest of the world, we were surprised by the events, but, soon enough, we took measures to protect and organize the work in accordance with the conditions. We managed to keep the working process going and we managed to organize, where possible, working from home, and having our teams rotate and work in shifts. This was a challenging period, because our duty was to protect our employees, but at the same time protect the consumers and meet their needs. The water supply was and will remain uninterrupted, and per the recommendation of the EWSRC, during the COVID-19 crisis we will not disconnect consumers who had overdue debts. We also conducted actions for debt collection without interest for late payment and the possibility of payment of debts in instalments. Of course, the availability of electronic services also played a big role in this period. I hope that the pandemic will end, and we will return soon to the "old normal".

● **What will be in your focus for 2021?**

In 2021 we will focus on completing the started activities, on the realization of started projects, but also on new projects and

investments, as we are motivated by the successes we have accomplished so far. We will continue to develop and improve virtually all segments of our operations. We place special emphasis on the procedure for construction of the Wastewater Treatment Plant - Skopje and on reducing water losses by up to 10%, as part of the priority activities. New investments are planned for the construction and reconstruction of the water supply and sewerage network, but also for procuring mechanization without which the daily activities of our company could not be performed. We will continue with the modernization of our laboratories, with the installation of water meters with remote reading, as well as with the implementation of the SCADA system, which refers to digital real-time monitoring of the network's operations.

● **What do you wish for yourself, as a manager, for the next year?**

As a human being, I would like to see the end of the pandemic, I wish for good health for all, a way out of the crisis that has changed our daily lives. I wish for new energy that will bring new beginnings, new perspectives and opportunities for each one of us. I wish for many smiling and satisfied faces of all generations. As a director, I wish a successful year, which will be beneficial to our consumers, the company, all colleagues and all citizens of the City of Skopje. A better and safer future for all generations.

Source: https://www.novamakedonija.com.mk/makedonija/skopje/%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b0%d0%bd%d0%b8%d1%86%d0%b0%d1%82%d0%b0-%d0%b7%d0%b0-%d0%bf%d1%80%d0%b5%d1%87%d0%b8%d1%81%d1%82%d1%83%d0%b2%d0%b5%d1%9a%d0%b5-%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b0%d0%bd%d1%83%d0%b2%d0%b0-%d1%80%d0%b5/?fbclid=IwAR25ldPVg74wX-teBHQIImLM6i4Lj7477yS_v4lLvCNgB43OdbDxKI722JZY

Project: “Supporting municipalities and public utility companies in handling the Covid-19 crisis”

It is highly likely that the COVID-19 pandemic will persist globally, which means that the public utility companies (PUCs) in the Republic of North Macedonia will continue to provide their services in circumstances of crisis.

The PUCs lack an established systemic approach to crisis management, they lack planning documents for business continuity during crisis situations, and the existing ad-hoc communication between LSAs and PUCs, imposes the need to raise the awareness on planning and on establishing an organized approach for providing business continuity during crisis.

For that purpose, ADKOM in cooperation with GIZ and IAWD through the project “Supporting municipalities and public utility companies in handling the Covid-19 crisis” is starting with the upgrade of the Program for Water Safety and Crisis Management in water supply and wastewater companies, with an emphasis on working under crisis caused by COVID-19 pandemic.

The selection of PUCs to be included is a result of last year's participation in the program “Water Safety and Crisis Management”, where the teams of PUC Komunalec - Strumica, PUC Vodovod Kochani, PUC Komunalec - Negotino and PUC Water and Sewerage - Prilep, took active participation in the activities conducted in the period July - September 2019.

The project will help with the development of a model and methodology for developing of an applied strategy and contingency plans for risk management and water and / or solid waste safety planning, including a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) template for public utility companies and municipalities.



The main goal of the project is to build the capacities of ADKOM so that it can then strengthen the resilience of the municipalities by increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of their public utility companies toward better provision of water services.

The specific goals of the project are:

1. To develop a capacity building model at the level of the association to enable public utility companies to prepare tailored institutional capacities for risk and crisis management related to COVID 19;
2. To upgrade D-LeaP training material on water safety and crisis management (to include wastewater collection, wastewater and solid waste treatment) and adapt it to the national context of the Republic of North Macedonia, as related to the pandemic COVID-19
3. To prepare a Guide / template for preparation of a model for a standardized Operational Plan for emergency re-

sponse / operational procedures for public utility companies and municipalities;

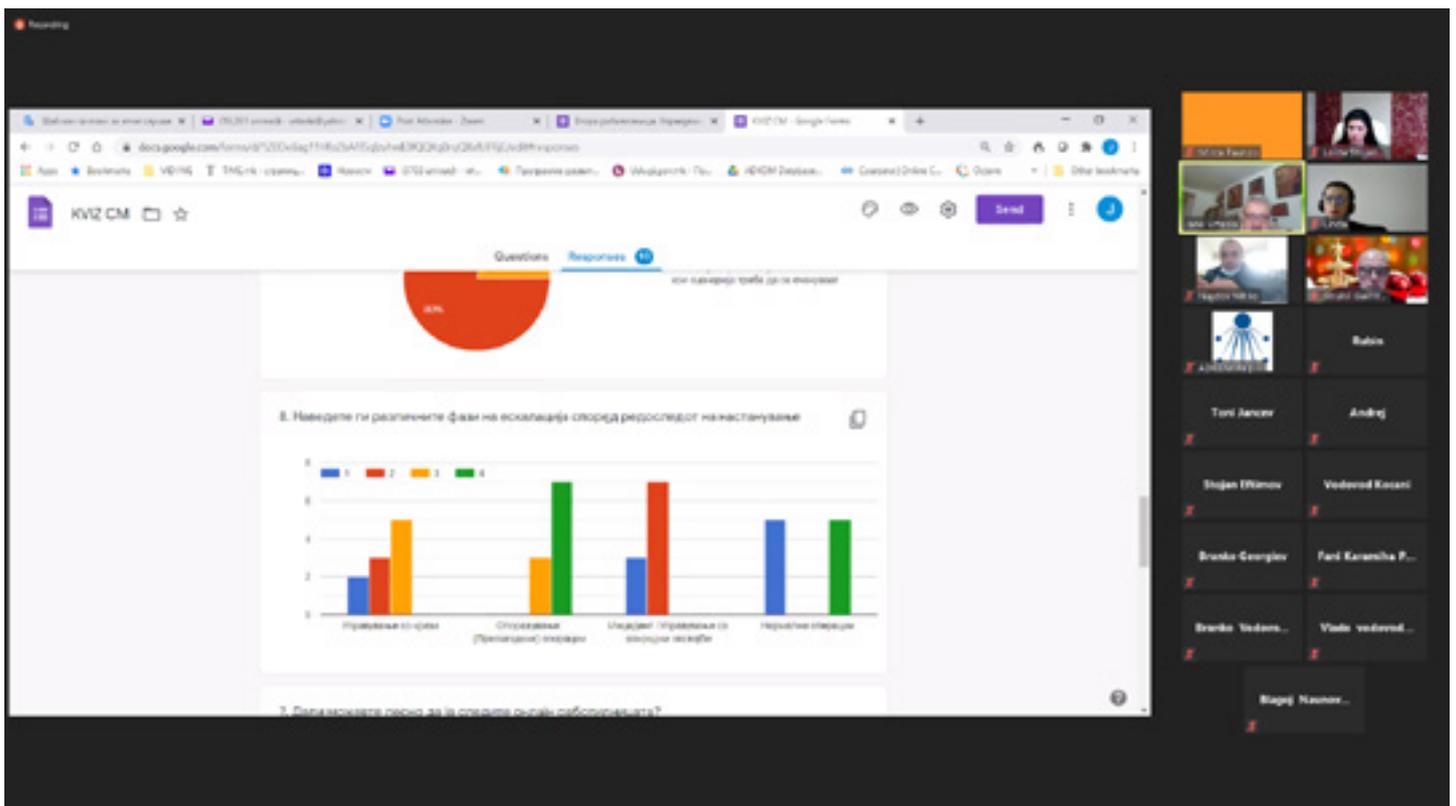
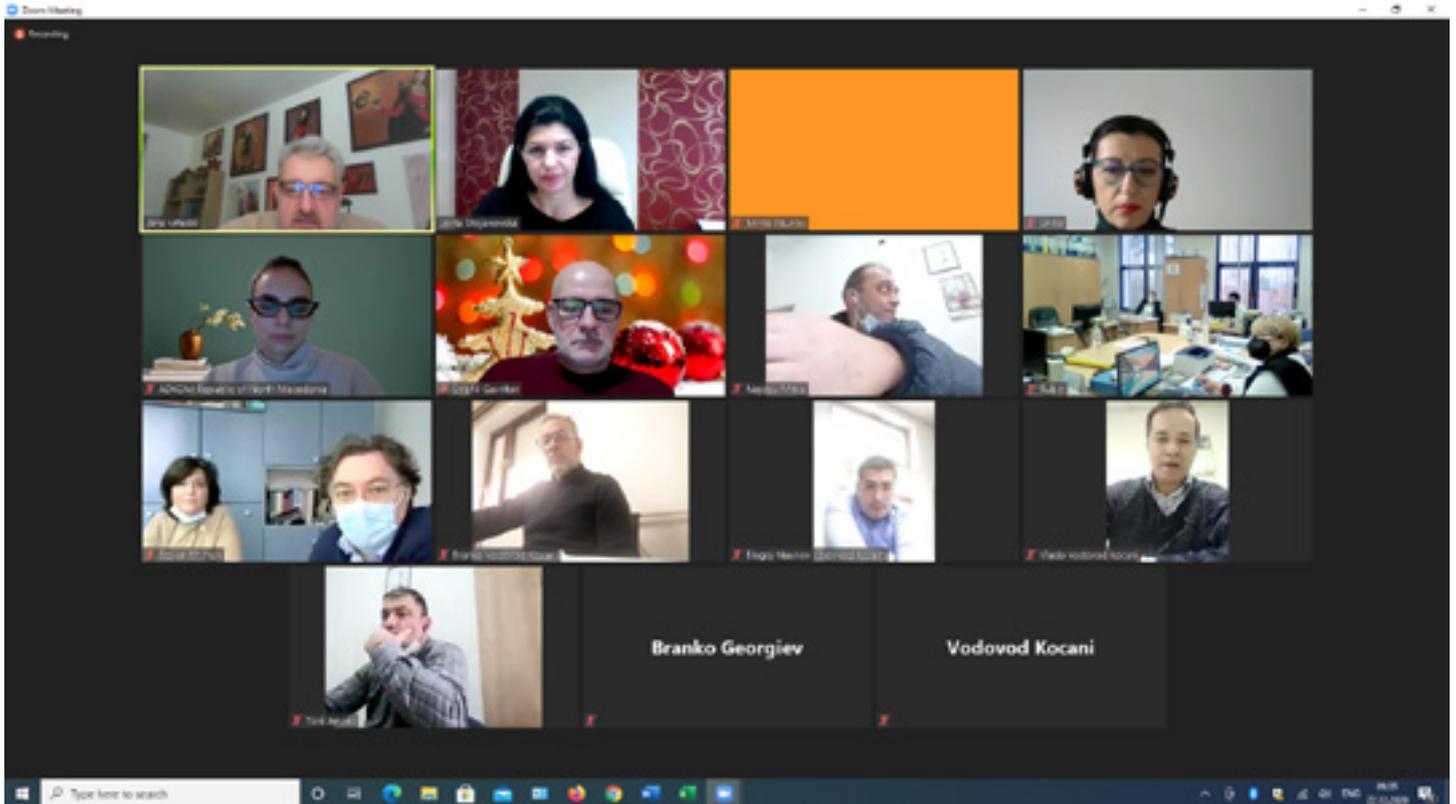
4. To provide training for the members of the crisis management and risk management teams of PUCs

The project has a short time for realization and all activities must be finalized by 31.01.2021.

During 2020, three joint online workshops were organized:

- 03.12.2020 - Introductory workshop with all four PUCs
- 16.12.2020 – Workshop 1 – joint workshop with all four PUCs
- 22.12.2020 - Workshop 2 – joint workshop with all four PUCs

In January 2021 there will be separate workshops for each PUC.



ADKOM and the Project “Open regional fund for modernization of municipal services, a response to COVID-19”

ADKOM through the Project “Open regional fund for modernization of municipal services, a response to COVID-19” implemented by the German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ), provided packages with materials

and equipment for 23 public utility enterprises that participate in projects financed by the German Government. The hand-over of packages with materials and equipment took place on 16.11.2020 in Skopje.



ADKOM: Timely decision of the Government for approval of 144,260,500 denars for 89 public utility companies



ADKOM (Association of public utility services providers of Macedonia) welcomes the decision of the Government for approving funds from the 2020 Budget in the amount of 144,260,500 denars for 89 public utility companies – members of the Association.

As pointed out by ADKOM, this is an important measure for handling the COVID-19 crisis as a one-off financial aid and it will provide support and assistance for the overcoming of the difficult financial condition of the companies.

–This decision of the Government comes after the meeting of the representatives of ADKOM with the Prime Minister Zoran Zaev, where they briefed him on the difficult financial situation of the public utility companies and current problems related to tax and other financial incentives and subsidies in order to improve the efficiency of their operations, stated the ADKOM representative.

Also, ADKOM add, that they have opened the issue before the Government of the collaboration with the state authorities for finding a solution for writing off the interest on the debts that the public utility companies have toward the state authorities.

– The public utility companies have undertaken all necessary measures during the pandemic, to operate safely and to provide healthy drinking water and a clean environment, all in the best interest of the citizens. The Prime Minister and the responsible ministers expressed their strong will to give strong support in the forthcoming period, and this was realized with the Decision passed on the 24th session of the Government, as announced in the statement.

Source: <https://kanal5.com.mk/adkom-navremena-e-odlukata-na-vladata-za-odobruvanje-na-144-260-500-denari-za-89-jkp/a449733>

The water supply companies of Skopje and Budapest with a joint project on the reduction of water losses



PUC “Water and Sewerage” with the help of “Water Supply Budapest” received a grant of 122,000 euros for the implementation of projects for efficient water supply and detection of water losses. The grant was awarded by the Western Balkans Green Centre, an instrument established in Hungary to support the green transition in the countries of the Western Balkans.

The project with which the company from Skopje is applying is titled “Reducing the effects of climate change, increasing the efficiency of water supply, energy use, planning of reconstructions and providing uninterrupted water supply in certain zones in Skopje, the capital of North Macedonia.”

In line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the project includes significant reductions and continuous monitoring of water losses and, identification of the causes of pipe failures.

For the purposes of the project, teams have been formed from both companies, PE “Water Supply and Sewerage” and “Budapest Water Supply”, which are composed of experts - representatives of several sectors. Some of the activities will take place online, and the rest, again in accordance with the circumstances, will take place with phys-

ical presence and practical exercises. The project envisages 6 stages of realization.

The first stage includes discovering the area to be explored, location analysis, review of non-invoiced water, as well as energy audit of the entire water supply system.

“In the second stage, the equipment for collecting pressure data and water meters will be installed in the designated area, in order to establish a database for further research. The third stage involves detecting hidden leaks, i.e., water losses, pipe cracks, and determining the exact location of these cases. The fourth stage includes data collection, error correction, evaluation, plans for reconstruction, education,” said the representatives of PUC “Water and Sewerage”.

In line with the objectives of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the project includes a significant reduction and continuous monitoring of water losses and identification of the causes of pipe failures.

Source: <https://sdk.mk/index.php/dopisna-mrezha/pretprijatjata-za-vodovod-na-skopje-i-budimpeshta-so-zaednichki-proekt-zamamaluvane-na-zagubite-na-voda/>

Deposited abrasives for winter conditions



According to the legal obligations of the PUC “Ohridski Komunalec” regarding the maintenance of public areas in winter conditions and the “Program for winter maintenance on the territory of the municipality of Ohrid” at several locations in the city and rural areas are deposited bags of salt and gravel, which our services and residents can use as a prevention to deal with frost and snowfall. The locations are: “Star Grad”, U.Z. “Goce Delchev” (barracks), “Pitu Guli” street, “Jane Sandanski” street (“Mini Market” point), all educational institutions on the ter-

ritory of the municipality of Ohrid, along the high traffic congestion roads and rural areas located on higher altitude, as follows: v. Elshani, v. Dolno Konjsko, settlement Istok, v. Raca, v. Ramne, v. Velestovo, v. Kuratica and v. Velgoshti. All on-duty teams have been equipped with mechanization, abrasives and the streets where the teams will operate have been defined according to priority.

Source: <https://www.ohridskikomunalec.com.mk/2020/deponirani-abrazivni-sredstva-so-koi-ke-se-deluva-vo-zimski-uslovi/>



PUC “Komunalna Higijena” – Skopje on the list of the 200 largest and most successful companies for 2019 in the Republic of North Macedonia



Име: ЈП КОМУНАЛНА ХИГИЕНА-Скопје
IP HIGIJENA KOMUNALE-Shkup

Дејност: Собирање и транспорт на комунален отпад

Генерален директор: Абдусамед Шабани

Показатели	УЗНАОС во Делови
Вкупен приход во 2019 г.	1.231.721.901
Раст на вкупниот приход 2019/18 во %	2,96
Добивка пред одмолување во 2019 г.	
Просечен број на вработени во 2019 г.	1337

КХС

ЈП „Комунална хигиена“ - Скопје
 Ул. 516 бр. 10, 1000 Скопје
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ЈП Комунална хигиена- Скопје (ЈПКХС) е едно од најголемите претпријатија од комуналната сфера во Р.Северна Македонија, чијашто основна дејност е собирањето и транспортот на комуналниот отпад од скопските домаќинства, како и од речиси 600 стопански субјекти во урбаниот и во руралниот дел на градот Скопје.

Седум пати во неделата, во три смени, екипите на ЈПКХС го преземаат отпадот од приближно 6000 подземни и надземни контејнери поставени на територијата на градот Скопје, додека два пати по неделата се празнат 90 000 канти за отпад што се употребуваат во индивидуалните домаќинства. Екипите на ЈПКХС секојдневно ја одржуваат хигиената на шест милиони квадратни метри јавни и сообраќајни површини, што подразбира нивно секојдневно метење и миење.

Во текот на првите шест месеци од 2020 година, екипите на ЈПКХС отстранија 7081 м³ отпад одложен на јавни површини, што претставува зголемување од над 52 проценти во однос на расчистените диви депонии во истиот период минатата година, а беа подигнати и транспортирани и вкупно 74 578 тони комунален отпад.

Со цел спречување на ширењето на вирусот Ковид-19, ЈПКХС во првата половина од годината секојдневно спроведуваше машинско миење со автоцистерни и дезинфекција на сите булевари и поголеми улици во градот, како и рачно миење и дезинфекција на најфреквентните јавни површини во градот Скопје, како што се плоштадот Македонија, плоштадот Филип Втори, улицата Македонија, Камениот мост, мостот Гоце Делчев и Старата скопска чаршија.

И во претстојниот период, првен приоритет на раководството на ЈПКХС ќе остане заштитата на јавното здравје, а активностите на Претпријатието ќе бидат насочени кон намалувањето на ризикот за проширување на вирусот Ковид-19. Во таа насока, ЈПКХС отвори ново Одделение за грижа за корисниците, со цел полесен, побрз и побезбеден пристап до услугите од доменот на административното работење на Претпријатието и воведо опција за онлајн плаќање на побарувањата за собирање и транспорт на комуналниот отпад.

На граѓаните коишто имаат потреба да се ослободат од својот капацитет отпад (стар мебел, електронски и електрични апарати), ЈПКХС им ја нуди можноста овој вид на отпад бесплатно да го одложат во центрите за селекција лоцирани во Карпош и во Вардариштите, секој ден во неделата, од 07 до 19 часот.

БЕСПЛАТНА ТЕЛЕФОНСКА ЛИНИЈА ЗА УСЛУГАТА - СОБИРАЊЕ КАПАЦИТЕТ ОТПАД - 0800 222 33
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“We are still insisting that the EWSRC takes over the charge for setting the prices for water services”



The Energy and Water Services Regulatory Commission (EWSRC) with the Draft Law on Communal Waste, which is in the final stage of adoption, will be responsible for setting the prices of municipal waste and therefore this year its competencies in the field of water services will increase, announced the Chairman of EWSRC Marko Bislimovski, for MIA.

-Additionally, we are still insisting that the EWSRC takes over the charge for setting the prices for water services as well, as so far we have been setting only the minimum and maximum price, after which the municipal councils adopt the final prices within the framework given from us. We request that the EWSRC adopts the final process for the water services, said Bislimovski, in the interview for MIA.

He also added, that in the field of water services, EWSRC already

set the minimum and maximum process for the water services and 95% of the public utility companies go along that framework, where the minimum price is slightly lower than the current one and the maximum price is slightly higher.

- It is typical that the minimum price does not take into account the investments and so the expectations are that it serves only for the survival of the public utility companies. Therefore, in the past period, in several municipalities in the country we have been facing long-term defects of the water supply systems that affected the operations of public utility companies and only small amounts were invested in water infrastructure in the country, said Bislimovski in the interview for MIA, which will soon be published in full./MIA

Source: <https://kanal5.com.mk/bislimovski-za-mia-kje-se-zgolemat-ingerenciite-na-rke-vo-delot-na-vodni-uslugi/a455828>

Wastewater treatment plant – Skopje received the second place award from EBOR



PUC Water and Sewerage Skopje is the winner of the second place (silver) award at the Sustainability Awards 2020, organized by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development-EBRD, announced the General Manager Dusko Veskovski on his Facebook profile.

The project for the wastewater treatment plant - Skopje won the second prize in the category of climate renewal and sustainability, in a competition of 47 nominations. A total of 16 companies from 11 countries around the world were selected as winners of this year's awards.

The Wastewater treatment plant - Skopje will have a capacity of equivalent to 500,000 inhabitants and is an environmental capital project, whose value is estimated at about 136 million euros, which will provide treatment of urban wastewater in accordance with EU standards, and will reduce the pollution of the river Vardar, improve the conditions of the environment, and at the same time improve the quality of life of the citizens of the city of Skopje.

Source: <https://civilmedia.mk/proektot-za-prechistitelnata-stanitsa-skopje-dobi-vtora-nagrada-od-ebor/>



PUC “Water Supply” Kochani in the period September – December 2020

Investments (September- December) 2020

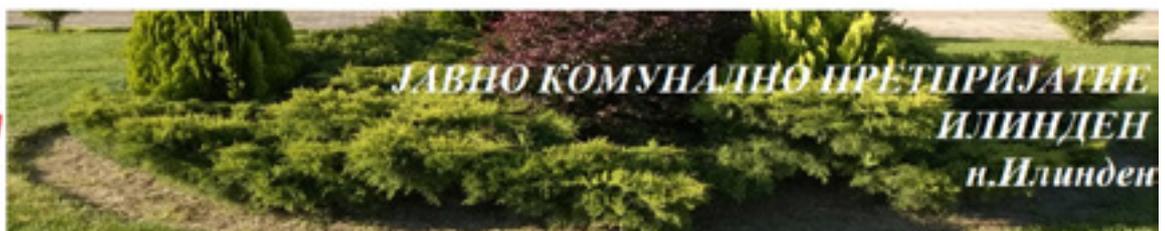
Benefits from the investment in the WWTP (Wastewater treatment plant) Mojanci.

From September 2020, with the treatment of the waste sludge, started the production of natural biogas-methane, the purification of the obtained gas (process of desulphurization of methane) and production of electricity of about 800 kWh / day.

High quality compost with durable chemical and physical properties has been produced for which positive laboratory tests have been obtained from accredited laboratories as well as Recommendation for entering the compost in the registry of natural fertilizers from the laboratory of the Agricultural Institute in Skopje. It is expected to be available for use for the next sowing.

Investment in exploitation well in a well deposit Grdovski orman

A new exploitation well with a depth of 50 meters and F400 with a capacity of 40 l/s is operational from the end of October 2020. The construction includes a brick house, an electric cabinet, and a submerged deep pump unit with a power of 11 kW. The total investment is 40,000 euros.



PUC “Ilinden” – Ilinden in the period September- December 2020

- Participation in a pilot - project for selection of glass packaging waste financed by GIZ through ZELS, with participation of two Macedonian municipalities: Ilinden and Stip. As part of the project, locations on the territory of the municipality of Ilinden are determined, on which special containers for storage of waste from glass packaging are placed. The locations are distributed in all 12 settlements in the municipality of Ilinden, and in this period 13 new locations have been determined.
- Maintenance and extension of street lighting network
 - 268 burnt bulbs were replaced;
 - The street lighting networks was extended for 1,090 m, with 46 new lighting spots.
- Arranging of a public area of 1000 m² at the sports terrain in Kadino, where 70m³ of quality soil was brought and dispersed, as well as landscaping and sowing of grass seeds.
- Preparations for the winter period: a truck was adapted and put on stand-by equipped with a knife for cleaning snow and a mechanism for scattering salt and gravel on the roads as well as 3 construction machines.