

Purification of Domestic Effluents in Hyogo Prefecture or "99% Program"

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Since September 1990, the Hyogo Prefectural Government has been promoting domestic effluents treatment in cooperation with local governments and residents under a so called "99% Program." The goal of the program is to treat domestic effluents that are discharged from 99 percent population in the Prefecture by 2004 by constructing sewerage and other treatment facilities in accordance with Domestic Wastewater Processing Plans to be drafted by respective cities and townships.

The objective of "99% Program" is to facilitate the environmental preservation of public water bodies and create clean environments in the Prefecture. Also, the improvements of living environment through the introduction of flush toilets and other amenities are expected to provide a basis for building the "Refreshing Hyogo" and for promoting urban population's exposure to rural areas.

The Prefectural Government provides assistance to city and township governments in depopulated areas where budget and civil engineering levels are inadequate. For instance, it constructs village sewerage facilities on consignment basis in townships which lack engineering capabilities. The Prefectural Government provides local governments with financial assistance in order to facilitate sewerage system planning and designing and also offer training courses to local government officials and engineers.

Regarding assistance to local residents, the Prefectural Government provides those who install individual home type treatment facilities with financial assistance in order to supplement assistance provided by local governments. When "99% Program" started in JFY1991, the domestic effluents treatment ratio in Hyogo Prefecture was 68 %. That ratio reached 90 % in JFY2000, having made Hyogo Prefecture ranked 3rd best among 47 prefectures as far as domestic effluents treatment is concerned. Hyogo is now behind only Tokyo and Kanagawa prefectures.

Recently, the growth of treatment ratio is especially high in rural areas, having reached 90% or more in 22 cities and townships out of 88 in the whole Prefecture.

Despite the improvement of treatment ratio, some local governments still face difficulties, including oppositions among local residents against particular sewerage plans and the lack of adequate implementing capacities among local administrations. Therefore the Hyogo Prefectural Government is determined to enhance cooperation with local governments and residents with a view to accomplishing the "99% Program".