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## City upgrades wastewater system to boost business

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By Eric Robinette

Staff Writer

**FAIRFIELD** — The city has upgraded its wastewater facilities with a \$260,000 project that will better accommodate economic growth, including the expansion of Koch Foods, the city's largest water user, officials said.

Fairfield increased the capacity of its lift station that serves one of its main business corridors, along Seward Road. A lift station is an underground pumping system that moves wastewater upward through the sewage collection system, according to the city.

The city has 12 lift stations, said Dave Crouch, the director of Public Utilities. The one on Seward Road serves businesses such as Koch Foods, a chicken processing plant which in 2012 announced a \$45 million expansion, adding 390 new jobs. Koch is the city's largest water user by a considerable margin, he said.

That expansion is just now coming online, said Greg Kathman, the city's economic development manager.

"It's a pretty busy industrial park, and the station was being built to accommodate the expansion at Koch Foods, which is getting to be at full build-out. This should certainly serve that park more efficiently," Crouch said.

The work on the lift station is designed to increase peak flows from 1.8 million gallons per day to 2.6 million gallons per day, according to city documentation. The work also included the addition of an emergency generator for use in power outages.

The expansion took some time to get under way because a drought after the initial announcement increased the price of corn that Koch used to feed its chickens, Kathman said. Now that the market has settled, Koch is adding one of its new production lines. It had four lines already, and the expansion will add a total of three more, he said.

The \$260,000 cost for improving the lift station was offset by a \$100,000 economic development grant from Duke Energy, Kathman said.