



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Lowell Council Approves Plan for Litehouse to Pretreat Process Water**

**Lowell, Michigan, May 7, 2018** – Lowell City Council approved a plan during its Monday meeting that will allow Litehouse, Inc. to pretreat the water used in its manufacturing processes.

The Council approved the terms of a lease and operation agreement that will enable Litehouse to pretreat its process water at 625 Chatham St. The decision will allow Litehouse, the largest employer in Lowell, to more cost effectively pretreat the process water it generates in creating its signature salad dressings and dips.

For the past 17 months, Litehouse has trucked an average of 67,000 gallons of process water per day to Muskegon for treatment and disposal. This agreement will eliminate approximately 170 trucks from the roadway per month, resulting in reduction in noise pollution, greenhouse gases and the number of trucks passing through school zones.

During the same meeting, the Council and Lowell Light & Power Board approved an agreement with Lowell Energy AD, LLC, or LEAD, to terminate the lease and purchase power agreements it has held with LEAD. While the Chatham building housed both pretreatment equipment and the biodigester, the approval only applies to the pretreatment operation of Litehouse process water. The agreement does not permit the biodigester to restart operations.

“We are very pleased we have been able to reach a solution that makes environmental and economic sense for Litehouse,” said Lowell City Manager Michael Burns. “Litehouse has been part of our community since 1932 and is a great employer and corporate citizen. This will allow Litehouse to continue to operate and to grow right here in Lowell.

“Since Litehouse will only pretreat process water at the facility, we do not expect any of the odor issues associated with the former biodigester.”

Litehouse has a successful history of wastewater management in its other production facilities located in Idaho and Utah and has spent years investing in research in order to determine the best path forward in handling its wastewater in Lowell.

Litehouse will operate the pretreatment facility utilizing single-source effluent from its manufacturing facility on Foreman Street. The Company anticipates it will take six to eight weeks to complete the necessary work to begin pretreatment operations, with an expected start date in June. During this time, representatives from Litehouse will meet with neighbors close to the facility, offering tours in advance of operations beginning.

“Over the past 10 years, we have experienced substantial growth in our popular salad dressings and dips, which are produced in Lowell,” said Jim Frank, president and CEO of Litehouse. “This growth has allowed Litehouse to invest nearly \$22 million dollars in facilities and equipment and maintain a workforce of more than 400 permanent residents in the greater Lowell area.

“Because we are a 100 percent employee-owned company, and many of our employee-owners live in the area surrounding the facility, it was of the highest importance that we found a solution that would ensure a comfortable living environment for all of our employee-owners and our local neighbors. We appreciate the ability to work with the City on finding the right solution and are committed to ensuring our operations do not impact residents.”

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