ABSTRACT

Public Health has become a major area of national focus within the twentieth century, primarily due to widespread population growth, diverse population settlement patterns and the subsequent prevalence of communicable diseases.

As societies evolved, so too did the need to refine methods of community waste disposal. For example, nomadic man's waste was allowed to decompose in the open air while agrarian man's waste was buried in pits. The change in method of disposal was occasioned by man's increased appreciation and understanding of the communicable nature of disease, various transmission media, e.g. flies, insects and the correlation between personal hygiene, environmental sanitation and public health.

Today, urbanized and sub-urbanized communities produce inordinate volumes of sewage which have required more sophisticated management systems, namely treatment plants that would essentially render waste water inert.

The present proliferation of sewage treatment plants in Trinidad and Tobago should serve to spur the nations' health administrators into ensuring that prescribed quality standards are
observed at all times given the delicate nature of community health
and environmental preservation.

In Trinidad and Tobago there is an almost deafening silence
on the issue of a legislated and active enforcement of a code of
practice governing treatment plant operations. Additionally, there
has been a dirth of research and recorded data on these systems, thus
up to date positions on the modus operandi of the plants are almost
non-existent.

Whilst W.A.S.A. is empowered as the water and sewerage
authority in the twin-island state, the mobilization of the necessary
resources to ensure observance of operating standards has been
painfully slow. The present economic downturn has served to impose
additional constraints (financial) which will certainly immobilize
progressive movement even further.

This report seeks in the main to explore by way of case
study method the present state of affairs with respect to the
operational and legislative framework in which treatment plants
operate and to make recommendations on revitalized strategies and
the kind of dialogue that has to be initiated between agencies that
are responsible either directly or indirectly for the preservation
of community and environmental health.