

Our goal is to facilitate an experience that will cultivate learning, and build environmental awareness.

This handbook has been designed for students/teachers, and other educational groups who wish to tour the ALCOSAN wastewater treatment plant. The information provided in this handbook will provide visitors with practical safety guidelines, general tour information and other relevant information to consider before arrival. Just as you have decided to tour the plant and have expectations of the ALCOSAN staff, we too have expectations of our visitors.

General Tour Information

Tours are conducted from March through October, between the hours of 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday. Students in grades 4th – 12th are encouraged to visit. Accommodations can be made for students in lower grades on a limited, case-by-case basis.

ALCOSAN requires one chaperone for every 10 students in a single tour group. Upon arrival to the plant, if the ratio of chaperones is less than 1:10 the tour will be suspended. To schedule a tour of the plant, contact Twila Simmons-Walker, at 412-732-8045, twila.simmons-walker@alcosan.org, or Erica LaMar, at 412-732-8027, erica.lamar@alcosan.org.

Safety

Teachers/Chaperones: It is important that you review the attached *Safety Guidelines Agreement* and *Safety Rules & General Guidelines for Plant Tours* with your students. Each student needs to sign the agreement, as well as the teachers/chaperones, and return it to ALCOSAN no later than two weeks before your desired tour date. Please note that your tour will not be confirmed until we have received the signed *Safety Guidelines Agreement* and you have received written or verbal confirmation stating such.

Please note that safety is our *number one* priority. Whenever visitors tour the plant, we implement extended safety measures to ensure that each and every visitor receives not only an interesting and educational experience, but also a safe one. Whenever students visit, the concern for safety is **maximized**. Safety rules and requests of the staff must be followed for the duration of the tour. Any safety equipment distributed to visitors during the tour must be worn throughout the visit, and whenever stated, returned following the tour. (ie..safety glasses, hard hats, ear plugs, etc.)

The plant is situated on approximately 56 acres, and the tour is a walking tour. For these reasons, it is recommended that visitors using crutches, walkers, or other devices to assist with mobility refrain from the standard walking tour, and opt to visit during our annual Open House in the fall, at which time we offer more suitable accommodations for our guests requiring assistance with mobility.

Although visitors will not have direct contact with sewage waste, it is required of all visitors to wash hands before leaving the plant.

Attire & Footwear

Visitors should arrive wearing comfortable clothing and walking shoes. Tennis shoes, or rubber soles are acceptable. The following are not acceptable footwear while touring the plant:

Open toe shoes (of any kind)

Slippers

Flip-flops

High-heeled shoes

Shoes with a shiny or slippery sole

Hats of any kind (unless provided by ALCOSAN)

Loose or dangling jewelry or clothing

Odors

Please be aware that the possibility of odor does exist. The very nature of what we do is sewage treatment and therefore odors are a common occurrence in specific areas of the treatment process. While we understand some adolescent reactions to the observance of odors is to be expected, students need to remain composed and respectful to plant personnel, and processes while on the tour.

Note: Any odors that may be noticeable in clothing will dissipate after a few hours.

Tour Length

Visitors should expect the tour to last between 60-90 minutes depending on the size of your group. Please allow additional time for hand washing upon conclusion of your tour.

Early/Late Arrival

Please make every effort to arrive at your scheduled tour time. If you arrive more than 10 minutes early, your group will be expected to remain on the school bus, or vehicle you arrived in until your scheduled tour time. The tour guides are expecting you to arrive at the time you requested and therefore will not be available to begin your tour early.

Please notify us as soon as possible if you will arrive late for your scheduled tour so that we can notify the appropriate staff expecting your arrival.

Transportation/Parking

At the time of your request for a tour you will be asked to notify ALCOSAN of the number of cars or buses expected to transport visitors to and from our facility, and we will arrange for your free, on-site parking. Upon arrival to the plant, **all** visitors must check in at the security office. We ask that all visitors remain on the bus/car until a member of the public relations staff greets you with instructions on how to proceed.

Digital Media and Photography Policy

Any requests to photograph or record parts of the treatment process or any area of the plant should be made at the time of tour request, or upon arrival. All requests will be forwarded to the Manager of Public Relations and approval provided before starting the tour.

***** Most of the tour will take place outdoors. As such, predictions of inclement weather and actual conditions may warrant rescheduling of tours. ALCOSAN will monitor weather predictions within 24 hours of a scheduled tour and contact you if the tour would need to be rescheduled. Additionally, we ask that you monitor weather conditions predicted for your scheduled tour date and reschedule as needed.***