



Maritime Provinces Water & Wastewater REPORT

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NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Todd Richard
Chairperson of the MPWWA

Greetings everyone, it only seems like a short while ago we were enjoying a very successful conference led by our conference chair Chuck Muise. Now after a wet, cool spring things are busy getting ready for the construction season and completing some of the much-needed water and wastewater projects we planned over the winter.

Our executive had a busy year but we worked together so successfully with our common goals it was much more a pleasure than a burden, true attributes of a great team. Some of the highlights of the past year were: the MPWWA's bylaws were changed to allow it to become incorporated; 21 training workshops were put on with 339 members in attendance; the Association's membership grew to 817, and we put on a great conference that had standing room only in many workshops.

Thanks go out to Chuck Muise and his wife Michelle for all their efforts to make the 2011 Halifax Training Seminar the success it was.

Many thanks are extended to Alan Benninger and Holly Macintosh for organizing and coordinating the 2nd Annual Charity Auction with all funds raised going to the "Children's Trust Fund".

It was also my pleasure to accept the nomination of Association Chair during this year's seminar.

As the MPWWA continues to grow I reflect back and appreciate all the hard work undertaken by dedicated volunteers passionate about the importance of their profession and this Association's goals and objectives. As our seminar theme was "Remembering the Past" we recognized and paid tribute to some of the founding members. The first honorary membership was presented to Jim Shaffner, one of the driving forces who launched this Association 30 years ago. We also had the pleasure of presenting honorary membership's to Judy Carr and Dave Macintosh although not in attendance we wanted to recognize all the hard work, time and effort they gave this Association when they served on the executive. Eddie Guillard with over 30 years as a member became the first to hold Life Member status.

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Students from Stratford Elementary School have lots of fun and learn about the importance of conserving water when Billy Ramsay of the Stratford Utility and Public Works Department visits with his interactive mascot "Willie". (See the story on page 7) (Photo: Courtesy of the Stratford Utility and Public Works Department)

Water issues discussed at FCM annual

The construction and maintenance of sustainable water and wastewater systems was on the agenda when municipal politicians gathered in Halifax in early June for the Federation of Canadian Municipalities annual meeting.

Water issues were raised at a panel discussion hosted by Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) National President Paul Moist. He said Canada's water resources are facing unprecedented threats and challenges. Communities

right across the country must address critical issues like the infrastructure deficit, the impact of climate changes, new environmental regulations and water operator recruitment and retention.

"The federal government has introduced new wastewater effluent regulations that may require municipalities to upgrade their facilities. The new rules could cost more than \$20 billion to implement and could impact close to 1,000 water facilities across the country. Water workers may

need to upgrade their certification levels to meet new standards," Moist said.

He called on the federal government to help fund upgrades to wastewater facilities and support workplace training to upgrade certification and provide training for water treatment operators who will implement the new rules. "We must invest in the people to operate our water systems."

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Forty membership pins presented at MPWWA annual

Forty membership pins were presented at the Maritime Provinces Water & Wastewater Association's Annual Training Seminar held in Halifax in April.

Two 30-year pins were awarded to Brian Hazlett of Accessible Water & Wastewater Solutions Ltd. and Nicolas Legere of the Ville de Caraquet.

Four 25-year pins were presented to: Ford Spidle, Town of Wolfville; Willard D'Eon, CBCL Limited; Brenton Colborne, Town of Oxford and Bill Clair, Charlottetown Water & Sewer Utility.

Four members received 20-year pins: Christopher Savoie, Town of Grand Bay-Westfield; Mike O'Leary, Municipality of the County of Antigonish; Gary Drake, Town of Cornwall, and Chris Chelli, Bridgewater Public Service Commission.

Eight 15-year pins were awarded to: Lawrence Ryan, Michelin North America (Canada) Inc.; Bruce Murley, Town of Digby; Everett Moase, City of Summerside; Joe Hazelden, Halifax Regional Water Commission; Art Frizzell, Univar Canada Ltd.; Carol Dibble, Munic-

ipality of the County of Annapolis; Cole Belliveau, Greater Moncton Sewerage Commission, and Mike Abbott, CBCL Limited.

Twenty-two members received 10-year pins: Todd Richard, Town of Windsor; John Richard, Village of Black's Harbour; Christopher Paquet, NB Dept. of Environment; Charles Muise, Halifax Water; Nancy MacDougall, Municipality of the County of Colchester; Edward Linden, Michelin North America (Canada) Inc.; John Lam, ABL Environmental Consultants Ltd.; Steven Jorgensen, City of Saint John; Graham Huddleston, City of Saint John; Richard Graves, City of Saint John; Scott Grasman, City of Fredericton; Leroy Graham, City of Saint John; Kevin Gillette, City of Saint John; Jean-Marc Frenette, Ville de Beresford; Peter Flinn, Halifax Regional Water Commission; Raymond Fisher, Michelin North America (Canada) Inc.; Blair Firlotte, Town of St. Stephen; Joe Driscoll, Stratford Utility; Jason Daigle, City of Saint John; Ken Corkum, Municipality of the County of Annapolis; Roger Comeau, Ville de Beresford, and Terry Blanchard, City of Saint John


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Paul Klaamas, Leo Hynes and Chuck Muise and other MPWWA executive members organized the annual training seminar in Halifax. (Photo: Heather Jones)

Province committed to addressing sewage system

■ BY DAVE STEWART

THE GUARDIAN

Charlottetown (Prince Edward Island) Mayor Clifford Lee says he is confident the provincial government is willing to step to the plate and help pay to upgrade the city's aging sewage system.

Last week (mid-May) Lee met with Environment Minister Richard Brown and Fisheries Minister Neil LeClair, emerging confident that the province is committed to addressing the situation long term.

In what has become a consistent problem for shellfish harvesters, the waters around Charlottetown have once again been closed to harvesting after heavy rains flushed sewage into the Hillsborough River recently.

"It was a great discussion regarding the actual cause of the occasional overflow of the lift station on the waterfront as well as the occasional overflow of the wastewater treatment plant," Lee said Wednesday (May 25).

Part of the meeting with the provincial ministers was to submit a proposal for government to consider.

That proposal includes a sizable price tag - somewhere between \$20 million and \$24 million. Such a project would take three to four years to complete.

"Obviously, the city cannot afford to pay that kind of money on its own," Lee said, noting the federal government would have to be a significant partner as well.

Tuesday's meeting was to begin the process of getting the province on board financially and talks on that front will continue. Once an agreement is reached there, the two levels of government will approach Ottawa.

The City of Charlottetown has an old system that combines storm water and sewer lines, which means that every time there are heavy rains the system can't handle, sewage ends up in the river. That's what happened last week for the 17th time in recent weeks.

Adding to the problem is that Ottawa changed the regulations on combined systems last year. New guidelines stipulate all municipalities in Canada must now separate storm water from sanitary sewer.

Lee supports the new rules and the need to protect the environment but if Ottawa is going to change the rules it also needs to help with funding.

"Ottawa just can't sit there and change the rules and not offer financial assistance."

Lee said Charlottetown is just one of many communities across Canada facing the same problem.

"We're looking to comply with the new regulations but in order to comply with the regulations somebody needs to come forward with some additional dollars."

Lee has said in the past passing along the cost of the project to taxpayers is not an option.

The Charlottetown mayor added it's difficult to speculate when the work will start before all three levels of government reach an agreement on the funding issue.



In 2004 a Halifax WTP outfall pipe was floated from Bedford Basin to a location beside Casino Nova Scotia and placed in the water—part of the Halifax Harbour Solutions Project. (Photo: Halifax Water)

Update on Biosolids

In July 2008 CCME mandated a Biosolids Task Group (BTG), composed of members from provincial, territorial and federal governments, to develop a Canada-wide Approach for the Management of Wastewater Biosolids. The desired outcome of the initiative is a harmonized policy and regulatory framework for municipalities and others who manage municipal biosolids that protects the environment and human health and instills public confidence.

To inform its work, BTG conducted a review of existing legislation, developed a greenhouse gas calculator tool, and undertook a research study to investigate the efficacy of various treatment methods

to reduce emerging substances of concern and concentrations of these substances in municipal biosolids that are applied to land.

BTG also developed a draft policy statement and principles for beneficial use of municipal biosolids and a draft technical guidance document. The consultation document provides information about the work to date, the draft policy statement and principles, and the draft technical guidance document.

More information can be found on the CCME Biosolids webpage at: http://www.ccme.ca/our-work/waste.html?category_id=137

Comments can be submitted until July 30, 2011.

Federal government should finance water treatment upgrades: poll

Ninety-two per cent of Canadians believe the federal government should finance water treatment facility upgrades.

That's according to a Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) poll Environics Research Group conducted in May.

The survey of 1000 people found that 89% believe municipalities should receive more funding for Canada's "most precious resource" from federal and provincial governments.

The poll showed that 59% support a tax increase to

maintain service levels; 39% would prefer the services be cut and taxes left alone.

Canadians are particular about water service providers; 74% want water and sewage controlled by the public sector not individual companies and 57% do not want contractors or private companies providing water services.

The poll, released June 2, has a margin of error of 3.1 per cent, 19 times out of 20. Survey questions and results can be found at cupe.ca.

Monumental Halifax Harbour Solutions Project completed

On June 21, the \$333 million Halifax Harbour Solutions Project was completed and fully commissioned.

"After years of patience, residents have the harbour water quality they've been waiting for," said Mayor Peter Kelly. "It has been a challenging and rewarding project that will leave an environmental and economic legacy for generations to come."

When the project was originally proposed in 1997 by an advisory committee there were sewage treatment plants operating at Mill Cove in Bedford Basin and in Eastern Passage. But the harbour was polluted by over 181,000,000 litres of untreated water every day.

The project called for completion of the Halifax Harbour sewage collection systems and the construction of three new treatment plants: one at Cornwallis Street/Lower Water Street area in Halifax, one in the Dartmouth Cove/Sandy Cove area, and one at Herring Cove.

D & D Water Solutions Inc. (comprised of Dexter Construction, of Bedford, and Degremont Inc., of France) was contracted by the municipality to design and build the sewage treatment system.

The project officially got underway in November 2003 when construction commenced on the sewage collection system component of the project carried out by Dexter Harbour Solutions.

The function of the SCS is to convey effluent to the three new wastewater treatment plants. It is made up of all required piping, pumping stations, a 1-km tunnel under downtown Halifax, outfalls and diffusers that help to distribute/diffuse the treated water over a wider area once it is discharged into the harbour.

The Halifax Harbour Solutions Project was on schedule until Jan. 14, 2009 when an extended local area power outage caused flooding damage at the Halifax Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF) on Upper Water Street.

One of the two plant generators overloaded and shutdown and the facility was flooded with raw sewage. Although flooding in the plant was limited to the basement and wet well areas, the equipment—including five raw motor pumps—and systems in those sections required repairs or replacement.

The WWTF plant was closed and all the wastewater previously routed through it was discharged into Halifax Harbour. Sewage began flowing again through the WWTF plant in June 2010.

Halifax Water now owns and operates the HHSP. "This project has been a monumental task for staff and residents. While not without its challenges, we are pleased to see the project come in under budget and achieve such great water quality results," Halifax Water Board Chair Colleen Purcell said.



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MPWWA PROFILE: *James Jenner*

Every issue, the MPWWR shines a spotlight on an MPWWA member making a difference in the industry. James Jenner is the focus of our July Issue.

James Jenner a smooth operator

■ BY STEPHEN PATRICK CLARE

James Jenner has one of those smooth voices that just seems to put those around him at ease.

"I hide it really well," smirks the 46 year-old Annapolis County, Nova Scotia water treatment operator, referring to his often hectic schedule.

"The reality is that I've never been busier."

Indeed, the married father of three has had his hands full since taking over the day-to-day operations of the area's water treatment facility 14 years ago.

"Aside from all of the running around here for my job, I have been off taking certificate courses in places like PEI, Halifax and California to keep on top of all of the changes in the industry.

"If you had told me that my life would have turned out like this when I was younger I would have just laughed. It hasn't always been this smooth, but today I am grateful for where I am at."

Born in Toronto, and raised in Thunder Bay, Jenner somehow escaped the curse that plagued most of his Ontario brethren.

"I am definitely not a Leafs fan," he laughs, referencing the Big Smoke's much-maligned hockey team. "Actually, I am a (Ottawa) Senators fan, because their farm-team was in Thunder Bay while I was growing up.

"In fact," he continues, "If you want the truth I despise the Leafs outright. Ottawa – Toronto is one of the stronger rivalries in all of sports today and there is no love lost between their supporters."

Along with being an avid fan of the game, Jenner is also a passionate participant.

"These days the mantra seems to be hockey for six months of the year and soccer for the other six months," he smiles. "Of course, with three children, most of my time is now spent either coaching or watching."

His parental duties are not confined to the various fields of play. "My wife is a nurse and does a lot of shift-work, so we need to build our day-to-day lives around her schedule. It can be a little tricky, but most of the time we are able to pull it all together."

When he isn't busy being a family man, Jenner is practicing his profession.

"I do a little bit of everything around here, and there is always something to do," he explains of his various duties with the Municipality. "Along with my daily duties, we are very involved with the local communities; everything from repair work to things like putting together a slip 'n' slide day for the school kids and so forth."

It is, he confides, the most rewarding part of the job.

"I love meeting and helping people and being in a position to make some sort of difference in their lives, even if it's just in a small way."

By turns, he says it is the little things each day that he finds the most challenging.

"The big stuff I can deal with," he chuckles. "But something like getting a broken water pump to work can drive me out of my mind."

Thankfully, recent renovations to the area's water treatment plants are making life a little easier for Jenner.

Originally announced in 2006 as part of the Canada-Nova Sco-



tia Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund, the \$1.7 million project provided the design and upgrade to the Cornwallis Park water treatment facility to ensure compliance with provincial drinking water quality standards. More than 250 households in the area now have improved drinking water and improved service reliability.

"We were overdue for these upgrades and it has made a huge difference. Things are running way better.

"The challenge now is to keep it smooth."



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Jim Shaffner— happy to serve others

■ BY STEPHEN PATRICK CLARE

Jim Shaffner is shaking his head.

"If you had told me when we first put the Maritime Provinces Water & Wastewater Association together back in 1980 that it would have grown the way that it has I would not have believed you," he laughs over the phone from his home in Egerton, along Nova Scotia's northeastern shore.

"It really took on a life of its own."

Shaffner—who jokes that he is "old enough to have snow on the mountaintop, but young enough to still have a fire underneath me"—recalls the group's humble beginnings.

"A few of us got together after a training conference and thought that it might be a good way for us to better share our experience, resources and best practices. So, I wrote up few guidelines for the group and off we went."

Today the MPWWA boasts more than 800 members.

"I think that the secret of our success has been in staying true to our roots; we were formed for operators, by operators."

A lifetime student, with diplomas from the University of New Brunswick, the University of Western, Acadia and the Nova Scotia Technical College, Shaffner went to work for New Brunswick's Department of the Environment in 1977.

After 20 years of quietly plying his trade with the province, he and his wife returned to their Nova Scotia roots, building a home by the water in Pictou County in the late 1990's, where they reside today.

"We have a good life here," he confides. "This is God's country, with all of this natural beauty around us."

Shaffner was ordained as a minister 18 months ago and has taken over the congregation at Trinity United Church in New Glasgow.

"I have always been involved with the church, and my studies in faith just gently pushed me in that direction. The transition from my previous profession was quite natural actually."

What Shaffner means is that there is little difference between the secular world and the one of spirit.

"Both engineering and religion concern themselves with God in their own way," he says, "one by way of reason, the other by way of faith. They are inseparable components of man's search for truth and meaning."

"And both fields are centered upon the idea of serving others."

Recently, Shaffner was honoured for his service to the MPWWA when he was named as the organization's inaugural Honourary Member.

"It was wonderful," he smiles. "To be honest it was more of a testament to a good idea than a tribute to me. I may have been there at the beginning, but the reason that we are still around today is because of the many great people that came after me."

While he acknowledges that he is now content to watch from the outside, Shaffner says that his heart will forever be on the inside of the MPWWA.

"There are always new challenges at hand in this profession, and I'm around if they need me. I'm just happy to be of service."

CBRM votes to keep fluoride in water supply

BY CHRIS SHANNON
CAPE BRETON POST

[Sydney, NS]—Cape Breton (Nova Scotia) regional council voted to keep fluoride in the municipal water supply after more than three hours of furious debate on both sides of the issue.

Council was barraged by statistics, graphs and charts of data during five presentations by dentists, doctors and scientists.

For decades the water systems in Sydney, North Sydney, Glace Bay and New Waterford have used fluoride as a medicating ingredient against tooth decay.

At council's monthly meeting Tuesday (April 19), Dr. James Beck, an influential biophysicist at the University of Calgary who played a key role in convincing politicians to end water fluoridation in that city, told CBRM council the amount of fluoride used in drinking water isn't at issue, but the inability to control the dosage is the problem.

"A construction worker working in a hot climate outside in the summer is going to drink a lot more water than the office worker in an air conditioned building," Beck said.

"Infants drink more water, diabetics drink more water than most of us, so there's no control over the dosage and no one's watching that."

A professor specializing in environmental chemistry and toxicology at St. Lawrence University in Canton, N.Y., joined the discussion via Skype. Using a Power-Point presentation, Dr. Paul Connett said fluoride can interfere with brain activity.

He used an example from one study of children in China that linked a lower IQ score to drinking fluoride at a level of 1.9 parts per million a day.

Connett said fluoride builds up in bones and teeth. Children, especially at a young age, can be overexposed to the chemical, which can cause dental fluorosis, a health condition that leaves pits and white marks on teeth, and can alter the development of growing teeth in children.

The municipality has said the type of fluoride used in the CBRM is called hydrofluoridic acid, which is a byproduct from fertilizer and is certified for use in water supplies.



Dr. James Beck. (Photo: Chris Shannon/Cape Breton Post)

Local pediatrician Dr. Andrew Lynk said water fluoridation is the first line of defence against tooth decay in children.

With one in six children in Cape Breton living in poverty, Lynk said it has been shown that people on lower incomes don't pay as close attention to dental hygiene as recommended.

"A study five years ago of all the Grade 2 students in Nova Scotia (showed) in Cape Breton 50 per cent had active dental decay that's not treated," he said.

The head of pediatric dentistry at the IWK hospital in Halifax told councillors fluoridated water was most beneficial for children with disabilities such as autism, where brushing their teeth for the recommended two minutes is often very difficult for parents enforce.

Dr. Ross Anderson called dental fluorosis a "esthetic condition" and not considered a dental disease.

While council appreciated the information gathered by the experts, it was overwhelming for some around the table.

Coun. Darren Bruckschwaiger floated the idea of holding a plebiscite, but that was scuttled after several other councillors wanted to make the decision because that's what they were elected to do.

"I don't need a plebiscite and I don't need anything else to convince me how I'm going to vote," said Coun. Gordon MacLeod.

Moncton to debate the benefits of fluoridation this fall

BY KATHY JOHNSON

To fluoridate or not fluoridate the water supply is the question City of Moncton will be considering this fall following public input on the issue.

"We're keeping an open mind," said Claude Despres, Director of Corporate Planning for the New Brunswick city following a June 8 public meeting where residents as well as health care professionals weighed in on the issue.

An estimated 100 people attended the meeting, with the majority of the 30 presenters speaking in favour of the City discontinuing fluoridation treatment of the water supply, said Despres.

"We probably had about six groups speak in favour" of the City continuing to fluoridate the water supply, including Dr. Larry Peacock, president of the N.B. Dental Health Society, Dr. Anil Joshi of the Moncton Dental Society as well as the chief of dentistry for the IWK Hospital in Halifax.

Not all health care professionals spoke in favor of the practice however. American dentist Dr. Bill Osmonson, who is part of the Fluoride Action Network and International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology, made a presentation via telephone, raising questions and concerns about the benefits of fluoridation.

Over the past three or four years a fluoride free movement has been sweeping across North America, as more data comes forward showing potential links between the water fluoridation and cancer.

"It's not clear cut anymore," said Despres, which is what prompted Moncton City Council to take a closer look at the issue.

Other Canadian municipalities have also been weighing in on the practice, said Despres, including most recently the cities of Calgary and Waterloo, where water fluoridation is now a thing of the past. Quebec City also voted down the practice in 2007.

Cape Breton Regional Municipality on the other hand voted in favour of continuing to fluoridate the water supply after a public hearing in April of this year.

As for Moncton, a decision will likely come this fall, after a joint meeting of the legal and administrative committee, and the sustainable environment committee, where the issue will be dissected and a recommendation made to city council, where the final verdict rests.

In the interim, area residents have started a website and petition calling for Moncton City Council to have fluoride removed from the water supply. According to the Fluoride Free Moncton website, 179 people had signed the petition as of June 25. The goal is 2,000 signatures.

Water and wastewater improvements in NL

On July 7 the Newfoundland & Labrador government announced it would spend approximately \$2 million through the 2011 Municipal Capital Works program for water and wastewater upgrades in the Placentia-St. Mary's area.

"Water and wastewater projects are a priority not only for residents of this province, but also for our government," said Minister of Municipal Affairs Kevin O'Brien. "The three projects for communities in the area of Placentia -St. Mary's will certainly improve services by providing enhanced infrastructure to increase water quality and pressure and prevent leaks."

Phase one of a two-phase water line upgrading project will take place this year on Main Street in Whitbourne. This work will replace old and problematic water lines. A two-phase project will also commence in St. Bride's to upgrade infrastructure of two water supply sources for the community, with the goal of improving water quality. In the area of South-

east Placentia, a new booster system will be installed for the water system.

"Funding to improve water services in these communities will certainly be welcomed by residents," said Placentia-St. Mary's MHA Felix Collins. "Whitbourne has faced issues with aging water lines and this investment will help eliminate the need for constant repairs. Residents of St. Bride's will be pleased to know their water supply sources will be improved and the new booster system for Southeast Placentia will enhance services to residents of that area."

Earlier in the week the government announced close to \$2 in infrastructure projects for the south coast of the province. In St. Albans, increased water storage capacity will be added to the current reservoir to provide more water during peak periods and alleviate water shortages. Burgeo, Channel-Port aux Basques and Isles aux Morts will also receive upgrades to their water and sewer systems.

MLA speaks out about water supply

Argyle MLA Chris d'Entremont raised concerns in the (Nova Scotia) Legislature (in April) about government plans to decommission the Lower East Pubnico and Middle East Pubnico water utility systems.

"The water systems supply the local volunteer fire department and residents are rightly concerned about their safety if the water supply for fire hydrants disappears," said d'Entremont. "Why is the government suddenly rushing to close these facilities and at what risk to the public?"

The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal has operated the water systems for over 40 years. They have tried, unsuccessfully, to sell the water system to local business that would be affected by the decommissioning.

"Since the condition of the system is unknown,

local businesses do not wish to assume the risk associated with its operation. The government has now put out tenders for the decommissioning," said d'Entremont. "If government plans to go ahead with the decommissioning, would they at least consider extending the date until early 2012 so all parties understand the impact this could have on the community."

D'Entremont also pointed out a few hundred people work at the three fish plants in the area that use the system. In a region hit hard with high unemployment, these jobs are needed.

"This government has a horrible record for helping the South Shore economy but it is my hope he will slow down the process put in place and not put more South Shore jobs in jeopardy," said d'Entremont.

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Towns are tapped out

■ BY STEPHANIE STEIN
GANDER BEACON

The most valuable commodity in the world today, and likely to remain so for much of this century, is not oil, natural gas, or even some type of renewable energy. It's water—clean, safe, fresh water.

The reality is there are many communities without safe potable drinking water. Currently (June) there are around 200 communities in Newfoundland and Labrador that are under boil-order advisory, and depend on their province for support, which seems to be at an all time low. People on town councils are merely volunteers, trying to do the best for their community. Therefore, often the finances and expertise to implement crucial water systems have been severely lacking.

"Every Town has a responsibility to do some work to be proactive and deal with their own water systems. The problem is that most of them have very little financial resources, or human resources from the point of view they don't have properly trained personnel to be able to tackle some of the more complex issues," said Mayor Churence Rogers of Centreville-Wareham-Trinity.

He added, when Towns are dealing with chlorination systems and the complexities that come with looking after water, it becomes a real challenge. "The onus has to be on the province to make sure that municipalities get the support they need."

Mayor Rogers said his municipality is spending \$400,000 to take care of issues related to chlorination equipment, upgrading their pump house, cleaning and flushing lines that haven't been done for long periods of time, and there are few Towns out there that don't have the capacity to do that. Unless support is given by the provincial government, water systems shut down.

"We're at the mercy of consulting engineers and the provincial government to provide whatever systems they need to take care of those kinds of issues," said Mayor Rogers.

Minister of Environment and Conservation, Ross Wiseman said he is there to pay for 90 per cent of capital costs. Regardless of the infrastructure that needs to be installed, it works on a 90/10

cost ratio, where the Town is responsible for 10 per cent of the capital costs. However, in order for the towns to be eligible for funding, they absolutely need to demonstrate the ability to come up with its share. Water systems are high priority, said the minister, and if towns meet the capital requirements, they will more than likely receive support.

Mayor Rogers said the only real avenue is to lobby their MHA to acquire funding to finance infrastructure issues. Unfortunately, he added, some municipalities are drowning in debt, and need help. "The province needs to keep in mind that one major tragedy will come back to haunt them if something happens (illness from unsafe drinking water)."

Minister Wiseman emphasized boil-water advisories doesn't constitute an emergency, crisis, or contamination. "All we're saying is that for safe practice of water systems there should be a chlorination or treatment system in public water facilities." Over 500 water systems in the province are registered, so the province is aware of the communities without chlorination systems. Even with that knowledge, the province refuses to help the Towns in crisis resolve their issues.

Mayor Peter Lush of Gambo said it's time for Minister Wiseman to step up, and allocate more time and resources. His mere pittance will not do, said Mayor Lush. Gambo is under a boil-order advisory, and he explained that problems always arise after a system has been installed, especially when skill and dollars are lacking. In this case, a resolution almost never comes.

With a multitude of water systems that exist, The Beacon asked Minister Wiseman if he would be interested in exploring other options that do not include chlorination systems, which have their vices. He seemed interested in speaking to The Beacon the next day. He explained it would give him time to find information on MIOX, which is a non-chlorinated water system that is currently in the works. The Beacon followed up the next day, and was greeted by his employee who said, Minister Wiseman saw no need to continue with the interview, and instead passed the newspaper on to the MIOX website address.

Based information found on the MIOX website, MIOX treats water by creating a salt water brine



Health problems related to water pollution in general are estimated to cost Canadians \$300 million per year. (Photo: Stephanie Stein/The Beacon)

that kills all of the bacteria and viruses in the water supply. This is done by mixing a few drops of the untreated water with salt. This saltwater is then charged with electricity.


One of the downsides of MIOX is that it's electrical, and electrical equipment is not always reliable. It takes a long time to fully treat water. It can take hours to kill all viruses. However, the upside is that it kills the most common health threatening bacteria in a very short time, and it doesn't have chlorine.

According to various chlorination reviews, putting chlorine in drinking water is a quick and relatively inexpensive way to kill some, though not all, of the germs that are present in the water. Chlorine in drinking water can react with organic matter that is present, such as decaying vegetation. The reaction results in by-products, the most common of which is trihalomethanes, which have

been shown to increase the risk of cancer in laboratory animals. Tests on humans also show a possible link between the trihalomethanes produced by chlorine in drinking water and cancer. A report released by The U.S. Council of Environmental Quality states that "Cancer risk among people drinking chlorinated water is 93 per cent higher than among those whose water does not contain chlorine."

Reports on water treatment indicate the safest alternative has been shown to be reverse osmosis, which removes fluoride, chlorine, lead, and many other contaminants. This type of system is also available commercially and residentially.

Experts encourage that when buying a water system, look for the Gold Seal, which means the system has been tested and certified by the WQA (Water Quality Association) for performance and reliability.



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Grade 5 students at Stratford Elementary School in Stratford, Prince Edward Island learn about the importance of conserving water when Billy Ramsay visits once a year with "Willie", Willie's Water Wheel and other interactive displays. (Photos: Courtesy of the Stratford Utility and Public Works Department)

Ramsay uses innovative ways to teach water conservation

BY ANDY WALKER

The grade 5 students at Stratford Elementary School are usually eager to play outside during recess. But not when "Willie" is in the classroom.

"Willie"—who at one time was just an ordinary water cooler—visits the students once a year to help them understand the importance of water conservation.

Billy Ramsay created the interactive mascot in 2007 when he decided the best way to maintain the country's most vital natural resource was through the Internet generation.

The Utility Tech with the water utility department

in Stratford, Prince Edward Island explains that "Willie" has two sides—one that makes good decisions about water use and one that doesn't. The interactive mascot demonstrates how much water is used when teeth are being brushed and hands are being washed. "The water is collected in measuring devices so the children get a visual of how much water is actually wasted."

Ramsay also constructed Willie's Water Wheel. Every student's name is put on the wheel and they have a chance to win prizes every time it spins.

The children hear water sound effects throughout the hour-and-45-minute presentation—sounds typically heard around a home—and have to choose the

correct answer on their Water Droplet Chalkboard.

This year, Ramsay's model demonstrates rain that falls out of a cloud onto the roof of a home, goes down the gutter into the rain barrel and waters the garden. "I can't wait until the students see it," he said in April.

After the presentation the children are invited to draw a picture dealing with water conservation. The Utility Tech says there are usually over 100 entries that are narrowed down to 12 by town staff. The drawings are used to produce a calendar. All 800 students in Stratford schools receive one of the calendars. The other 600 are distributed at the town hall.

"The students go home and they are usually not

shy about telling their parents what they have learned and how their family can conserve water," he explains. "Hopefully, it is lesson they will take with them throughout their life."

The students do remember both the teacher and the lesson. "The first class I talked to is in grade 9 now and they still comment when I see them about how they are saving water—the most common (remark) is (about) taking 5-minute showers."

Ramsay says, "I now have taught over 700 students the importance of water conservation. My goal is to make sure every child that goes through Stratford Elementary has taken the program."

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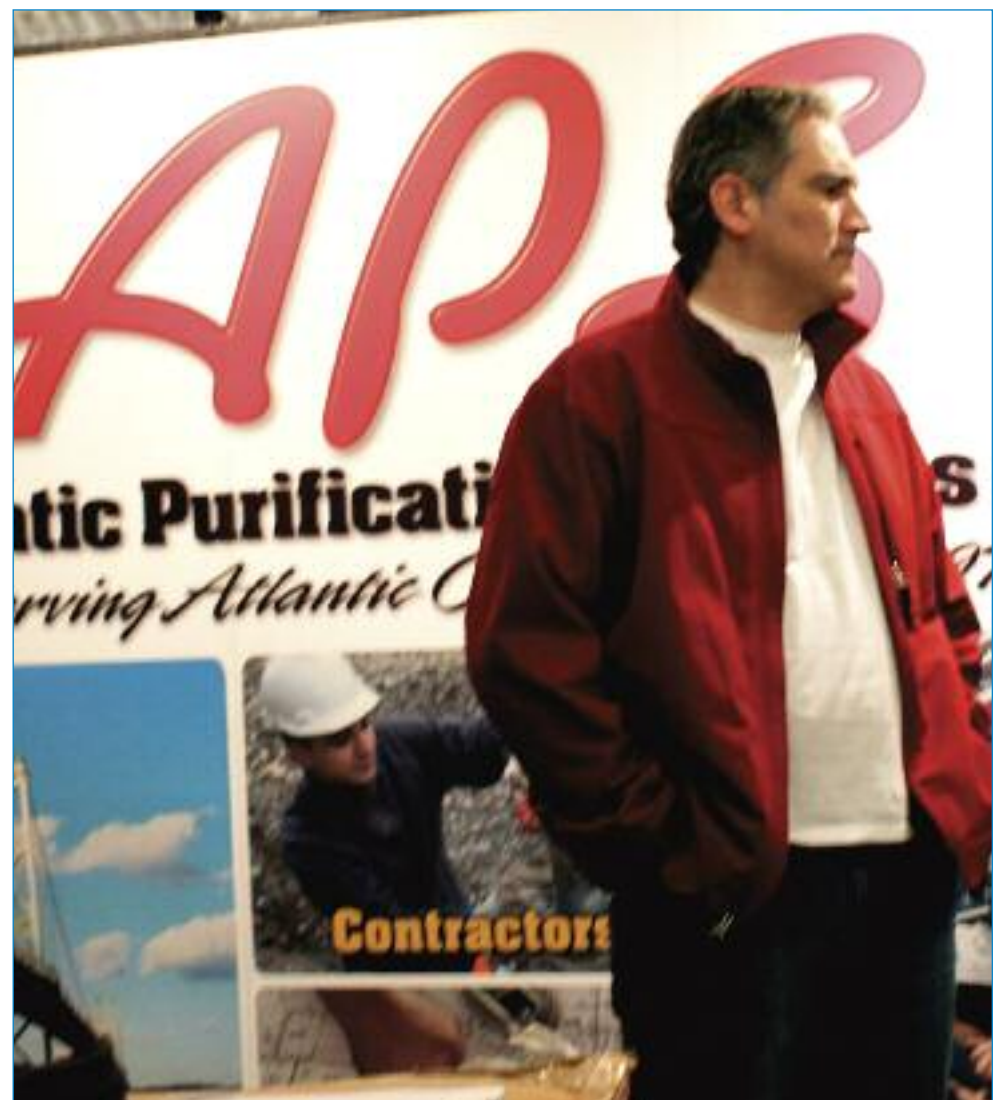
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Exhibitors prepare for the Maritime Provinces Water & Wastewater Association's Annual Training Seminar Trade Show. (Photos: Heather Jones)



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NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Todd Richard
Chairperson of the MPWWA

Continued from cover

As we move ahead I would like to welcome Steven Knockwood and Tim Henmen as our newest members of the executive. Thanks for stepping up to the plate guys I look forward to working with you.

During the past three years as Vice-chair I have had the pleasure to work with our outgoing Chair Andrew Garnett. A tip of the hat to Andrew for accomplishing many tasks, from hiring our first paid staff member, partnering with training providers, finalizing the procedure to incorporation, to all the many tasks and challenges in-between. On behalf of the members and executive a sincere "Thank You Andrew" for the great job you did leading the Maritime Provinces Water and Wastewater Association during your term as Chairperson. Have a safe and happy summer everyone!

Todd Richard
Chairperson of the MPWWA



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Alan Benninger and Holly MacIntosh are shown with some of more than 100 items donated for the MPWWA Silent Auction. (Photo: Heather Jones)

Silent Auction for Charity raises \$2,575.45

MPWWA's 'Silent Auction for Charity' held in conjunction with the Maritime Provinces Water & Wastewater Association's Annual Training Seminar in Halifax in April raised \$2,575.45.

The MPWWA executive was pleased the Children's Trust Fund had been chosen as the charity for the event "because of the broad range for which the funds are used for, and on the fact that

the charity focuses on the specific needs of children and their families," organizer Alan Benninger explained.

Several MPWWA executive members assisted Benninger and his wife, Holly MacIntosh, to set up the auction room at the Westin Nova Scotian to display the more than 100 items contributed by approximately 70 donors.

The hotel donated a one-night stay with breakfast to the Silent Auction. Benninger said it was one of the items that attracted a lot of attention. "We also had very active bidding on a Men's and Women's watch set donated by Halifax Water and a Montreal Canadiens book donated by Rob Hamilton, an executive member from Saint John."

Benninger said there were "only positive comments" from MPWWA members who participated in the Silent Auction. But he pointed out there were 36 less bidders this year than at the 2010 Training Seminar in Saint John—75 com-

pared to 111.

Benninger said while executive members (now Directors) had been responsible for soliciting items for the auction, organizers invite all MPWWA members to contribute toward future charity auctions held by the Association by gathering items in their local areas.

"This is only the second year we have included a charity auction. We look forward to holding another successful one in Charlottetown in 2012 and continue to contribute to the communities we serve."

Call for Presentations

32nd Annual Training Seminar Delta Prince Edward - Charlottetown, PEI April 22nd to 25th, 2012

The Maritime Provinces Water & Wastewater Association will be accepting submissions for workshop presentations for the MPWWA Annual Training Seminar in Charlottetown. Effective and relevant training helps us continue to protect public health and the environment in the communities we serve.

The theme for our 32nd Annual Training Seminar is "The Earth is Our Island – How We Protect It". MPWWA will be accepting abstract submissions for all topics related to water and wastewater that meet with the theme. Presentations shall be 1 hour in length - approximately 45 minutes for the core presentation and 15 minutes to accommodate questions from the delegates.

Have you been involved in a project? Or have an

innovation or product you would like to share with Maritime water and wastewater operators? Please provide a brief presentation outline for consideration to share with your peers.

We are accepting abstracts until the program is full. The deadline for abstracts to be submitted is October 14th, 2011.

Abstracts may be submitted electronically in 'Microsoft Word' format for consideration; send them along with your contact information to: Todd Richard, **Todd Richard Chairman, MPWWA**, Email: todd.richard@town.windsor.ns.ca; Phone: (902) 798-8000; Fax: (902) 798-0144 or by mail to: Town of Windsor, PO Box 158, Windsor, NS B0N 2T0.

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The courses are suited to people with a variety of

interests and backgrounds from those intending to start a career to certified operators who want to maintain their credits. Courses can be taken individually.

Students with a grade 12 equivalent can enroll anytime throughout the year. Although the courses are online, students do not have to be computer experts. They do need basic computer skills, access to a computer and an internet connection.

For more information, visit the NSCC website at: www.nsc.ca/learning_programs/coned/Program.aspx?I=14 or the NBCC website at:

www.nbcc.ca/en/home/campuses/saintjohncampus/continuingeducation/waterandwastewateronlineoperatortraining/default.aspx

Information about the NBCC courses is also available from Bob Ross at 506-643-7744, or Rob Reid at 506-658-6662 or nbccsj.water@nbcc.ca.

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Saint John moving forward with action plan

■ BY KATHY JOHNSON

The City of Saint John, New Brunswick is moving forward with its Action Plan for Safe, Clean Drinking Water.

“What Saint John needs is a modern water treatment facility,” said Paul Groody, commissioner of municipal operations and engineering for Saint John Water. “We have excellent water sources but the level of treatment is lacking.”

A Program Structuring and Implementation Plan, adopted by City Council on April 11, outlines 15 core projects that are the “most essential for assurance of safe clean drinking water,” states a briefing summary.

With a four-year timeline for implementation, the projects carry a \$172 million price tag, or \$57,433,000 from each of the three levels of government.

The program is built around a 100 ML/D (100,000 m³ per day) modern water filtration treatment facility to be located south of Little River Reservoir in East Saint John.

The plan also calls for reconfiguring some existing infrastructure, as well as the construction of new transmission lines, pumping stations and reservoirs.

“One of challenges for the Saint John water system is the fact you have two fast flowing rivers in the middle of the city,” said Groody. Adding to the challenge is the fact that Saint John is small in

terms of population but large in geographic area and in heavy industry.

As Groody explained, a lot of the big industrial water users don’t need treated drinking water. Taking them off the potable water supply line will be in everybody’s best interest.

With the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process already initiated, Groody said ideally the City would like to see the design work done in 2012, with construction starting in 2013 and completion by 2015.

“This is all funding dependant,” he stressed. “Until the funding is secured, our timing is really up in the air.”

Groody said the City has made submissions for funding and have discussed the action plan with provincial and federal elected representatives. “It’s a matter of having access to a provincial or federal program,” said Groody, noting the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) is pushing for another infrastructure program similar to the Build Canada program that is just wrapping up.

The City will soon hold an open house to unveil the plans to the general public and receive input.

“When we get to the point where we want to initiate the design process, there will be a public call for proposals to design the facility,” Groody said. “We’re hoping that will happen in 2012.”

Costly water study approved

■ BY ASHLEY THOMPSON

HANTS JOURNAL

Hantsport’s town council is working on addressing issues surrounding the quality of the (Nova Scotia) town’s drinking water and unsightly properties.

Finding a solution to drinking water woes Deputy Mayor Don Rockwell recommended the town hire CBCL to conduct a study that will determine if coagulation or nanofiltration will drastically lower the levels of trihalomethanes (THMs) and haloacetic acids (HAAs) found in Hantsport’s drinking water.

Rockwell said the study will reveal which method will work best at Hantsport’s water treatment facility.

“We can’t sit back and wait any longer,” Rockwell said.

CAO Jeff Lawrence said both solutions are costly, but the provincial government has informed him that the issue must be addressed.

Council unanimously agreed to fund the study that carries an estimated cost of \$27,125 plus tax at their regular monthly meeting June 7.

Nova Scotia Environment’s website explains that studies have linked high levels of THMs—compounds formed when chlorine reacts with organics—in drinking water with the development of cancer.

At a roundtable discussion during a community meeting in the Hantsport Fire Hall May 15, Rockwell said council may be looking at between \$500,000 to \$1.5 million worth of upgrades to the town’s water treatment plant once CBCL’s study determines the most effective method for reducing the level of THMs in the drinking water...

Walkerton claims settled

Over \$72 million has been paid to victims of the Walkerton, Ontario tainted water tragedy.

In May 2000, seven people died and close to 2,500 were ill when E.coli contaminated the community’s

water supply.

A total of 9,275 of the 10,189 claims qualified for compensation. They should all be paid by the end of the year.

Charlottetown buys land to expand water supply

■ BY ANDY WALKER

Prince Edward Island’s capital has taken a major step towards ensuring its residents will have a secure water supply for several decades.

City council approved the purchase of 76 hectares of land in Miltonvale Park near the western boundary of Charlottetown. Craig Walker, the city’s utility manager, said the long-term goal is to use the land as a new source of water for the growing population. He said the long-term plan is to have another water source capable of supplying 4,000 litres per minute.

The property was purchased from the Roman Catholic Diocese of Charlottetown at a cost of \$400,000.

But Walker noted, because it will cost in the neighbourhood of \$16 million to bring that system on line, the city is hoping to access federal and provincial programs in addition to its own dollars.

Now that the land is owned by the city, the utility manager said the next step is to work on funding. The city would like to see water flowing from the site by 2014 or 2015.

Currently, Charlottetown depends entirely on the Winter River watershed for its supply, drawing 6,703,744 m³ last year. Councillor Eddie Rice, who chairs the Util-

ity Committee, said the capital is counting on a combination of a new source and water conservation to ensure its long term needs.

A survey conducted by the committee shows residents of the Cradle of Confederation support that direction. City dwellers gave their stamp of approval to a rebate program for dual flush toilet installation. The program will provide rebates to water utility customers when they replace a high flush volume toilet (13L or more) with a low-flush volume toilet of 6L or less. Rebates of \$60 will be offered for 6L toilets, and \$75 rebate for 4.8L/flush or dual-flush toilets. Homeowners, business owners and multi-unit building owners are eligible to apply for up to two rebates. Residents are also eligible for a provincial rebate of up to 15 per cent of the costs for the purchase and installation of low-flush volume toilets.

Those taking part in the survey approved the idea of water metering by a 59-41 per cent margin. Currently, capital residents pay a flat rate per quarter. In addition, 64 per cent of those completing the survey felt homes with swimming pools should be metered.

The city has hired a water conservation coordinator, Ramona Doyle, who will be supervising the toilet rebate program.



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TEST HOLE



A Town of New Glasgow Public Works crew led by Jeff Grant works on new water valves on the East River Road. (Photo: Jennifer Vardy Little/New Glasgow Daily News)

Sewage treatment project still has fall completion target

BY DARRELL COLE
AMHERST DAILY NEWS

[Amherst, NS]—Heavy rain and mud have played havoc with Amherst's multi-million-dollar sewage treatment plant under construction on the marsh near the (Nova Scotia) town.

However, even though the (May) weather has made work difficult, the town's transportation and public works director said it's still on schedule.

"It is anticipated that construction will still be on

target for a substantial completion date in late November or early December," Ben Pitman said. "The only thing remaining to be done will be some minor landscaping on the lagoon berms and around the wetlands."

When work was suspended last fall the project was ahead of schedule.

Crews were scheduled to return to the site over the winter after the ground froze to continue working on the project, but were delayed by milder than expected weather.

Funding secured for water project

BY BURTON K. JANES

THE COMPASS

A major water system upgrade planned for the Town of Bay de Verde (Newfoundland & Labrador) is a step closer to becoming reality. The town's previous struggle to come up with the money to pay its share of the project is no longer an obstacle.

"I'm pleased to say that, as we speak, the project is going to tender and the ad is being prepared, hopefully this weekend," Mayor Gerard Murphy told The Compass last week (June 6). He hopes the project will commence by this fall.

The project, which is valued at nearly \$3 million, has been in the works since May 2009.

The town pledged some \$285,000, while the provincial and federal governments committed just over \$1.6 million and \$950,000, respectively.

However, because the town's debt ratio exceeds 30 per cent, traditional lending institutions gave a cold shoulder to the town, putting the project in jeopardy.

But a loan of \$240,000 from the Community Business Development Corporation helped get the project back on track.

To care for its part of the deal, the town is injecting \$60,000 in cash. The final piece of the financial arrangement fell into place when the town was successful in obtaining a short-term loan from the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce to cover the HST portion of \$130,000.

"It was a process that took a substantial amount of time and negotiations to bring to fruition," Murphy said.

The town approached CBDC when it learned the "organization had expanded its mandate from the private sector to funding that would fall into a category that municipalities would qualify for," Murphy said.

Major improvements coming

By the conclusion of the project, a local

seafood processing facility owned by Quinlan Brothers Limited will have access to a new, dedicated water line which will be unfiltered and unchlorinated.

Residents will also benefit from the project, seeing an immediate improvement in both water quality and quantity.

Finally, the operating cost of the system will drop significantly, with the construction of a "gravity-flow" system, designed to do away with the need for water pumping.

The seafood plant is a major employer in the region, and has had difficulty meeting its water requirements.

At odds with the province

Murphy praised the CBDC, but continued to express frustration toward the provincial government.

"Ministers of the Crown sometimes take a bit of an ambivalent approach to municipal politicians, on occasion losing sight of the ball," Murphy said. One of the mayor's frustrations is that, "in some areas, (the Municipalities Act) really ties our hands."

He profoundly dislikes it when provincial ministers comment that towns must "take responsibility for their own." Murphy contends that municipal leaders, not ministers, are the ones who are "on the frontlines."

Murphy is pragmatic about his personal differences of opinion with the provincial government.

"When it comes to promoting Bay de Verde and serving the interests of the residents, I will continue to do that as long as I sit in the mayor's chair. If I ruffle political feathers at the Confederation Building, then so be it. I'm sure I'll find another battle that will need to be dealt with," he said.

Detention ponds planned for Glen Falls

Saint John Common Council has determined that detention ponds are the most economical solution to the flooding problems in Glen Falls.

The small section of the New Brunswick city is located on a flood plain and a number of its houses are partially underwater after every major rain storm.

Saint John Mayor Ivan Court had proposed that the city purchase the highest-risk homes in Glen Falls, relocate the residents and raze the area.

But the plan was scrapped after a report from city engineering staff at a June 20 council meeting said 155 houses were at risk. Council estimated the price to buy them was \$13 million.

The director of public works, Shayne Galbraith, told reporters the city might purchase a few of the houses that had the highest risk of flooding.

Saint John has investigated other solutions to the problem. It looked into installing a large pipe to divert floodwater from the vulnerable homes in Glen Falls but concluded the project's \$51.6 million price tag was not feasible.

The city now plans to construct more detention ponds to contain some of the floodwater and prevent it from reaching Glen Falls.

The cost to build the first structure at Mystery Lake is estimated at \$800,000. The first step for the city is to order an environmental impact assessment (EIA).

But Galbraith said there is not enough money in his budget to cover the EIA so the study will not be commissioned until next year.

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Howley's hopes of gas tax credit funding water project dashed

■ BY PAUL HUTCHINGS

THE WESTERN STAR

[Howley, NL]—Officials hoping to upgrade the Howley's water system are wondering why they have been told the (Newfoundland & Labrador) provincial gas tax credit cannot be utilized for the project.

Coun. Don McLean said the town has been needing an upgrade in its water supply system for some time. They had hoped to change its current, older water pump supply to a gravity-based system and thought the provincial gas tax credit could be applied.

Howley is looking at replacing its water pumping system utilizing the province's infrastructure program, in which the province would pay 90 per cent of the project and the town would kick in 10 per cent. McLean said the town was told the gas tax credit could be used in place of the Town of Howley's 10 per cent share.

"We thought that it could be used for this and now this year we have been told that it can't," McLean said. "We haven't been given any explanation, except to say that it can't be done, it doesn't meet the criteria."

McLean said Howley's water system is getting up in age and is very expensive to replace. A gravity-based unit would be much more efficient, use

less power and be much more reliable in inclement weather.

MHA Darryl Kelly said he is aware of the problem and is trying to find a solution.

"One of the problems is that they want to use it as their 10 per cent, and that just can't be done in that program," said Kelly. "Their proposal unfortunately did not meet the criteria, but we are asking the province to look into it."

Kelly said that criteria includes a proponent in the gas tax credit stating that ineligible projects can include basic infrastructure improvements or replacements and standard servicing and distribution for water projects.

They can use a gas tax credit for other projects, he said, just not this type of project.

"On some things they can use it for, on some they cannot," he said. "We are looking for a solution."

Until then, McLean said the town will continue to use its current water system and hope it does not break down. He said the pump is about 30 years old and is so obsolete that it's getting difficult to find filters.

"We're operating this thing on a wing and a prayer right now," he said. "If they're going to give us gas tax money the community should be able to put it into what it believes is suitable."

Bonavista looking for new water lines

■ BY MALLORY CLARKSON

THE PACKET

Bonavista's water has asbestos fibres in it.

That's why the (Newfoundland & Labrador) town is looking for \$3.6 million in provincial funding to replace its water mains.

"Hopefully now with the government budget and all the extra money they're going to put into infrastructure, we might see some positive results," said David Hiscock, Bonavista's town manager, following last week's (late April) provincial budget.

"That is our number one priority right now."

When asbestos is inhaled, the particles become embedded in the lungs and may cause cancer. When ingested, however, the asbestos fibres just pass through the system.

"It still doesn't feel very comfortable to know that you have asbestos fibres in your drinking water," His-

cock said.

The waterline was installed in the 1960s. At that time asbestos-reinforced concrete was commonplace.

Now, however, that isn't the case.

Hiscock said because of the fibres the Town isn't comfortable hooking any new users up to the water line.

"We don't feel justified to give the services to them until we get a good water supply or a good source of water," he said.

"There are sections of town, newer sections, that haven't got any town services yet."

Bonavista applied for the same project last year, but it wasn't approved.

Hiscock said the town was told to apply for it again in 2011.

"They've got to realize that's our number one priority," he said.

"We desperately need a new water main."

Sewage treatment plans on hold

■ BY JENNY MCCARTHY

THE LABRADORIAN

Without more funding from federal and provincial government, the planned sewage treatment facility for Happy Valley-Goose Bay (Newfoundland & Labrador) cannot go ahead, Town Manager Wyman Jacques told the Labradorian on June 27.

Mr. Jacques and Happy Valley-Goose Bay Mayor Leo Abbass flew to St. John's last week (June 27) in the hopes of securing more financial assistance from both levels of government to begin construction of the Waste Water Lagoon system. This facility will see treatment for the town's sewage that currently flows straight into the Churchill River.

The tender for the first phase of the sewage treatment facility — the line — had closed and the town has a low bidder chosen — Glenn Corporation. With the bidders permission, however, the town has extended the deadline for awarding the tender to allow time to secure sufficient funding. The town has until the first week of July to decide on their next course of action.

The tenders for the second and third phases of the treatment plant have also closed and the town also has until July to award the contracts. Once the contracts are awarded, the construction

can begin.

Under the current agreement, the provincial, federal and municipal government's have a one-third cost-shared plan based on initial estimates of \$16.5 million for completion of the system. Any amount over and above this becomes the town's responsibility.

It was only with the close of the three tenders that the town realized just how much the treatment plant would cost.

The tenders revealed a \$22.1 million price tag. Factor in an estimated 10 percent cost overrun, this would mean a nearly \$8 million increase over the initial estimates of \$16.5 million.

"There's no way the town could take this on without increasing taxes by a huge amount," Mr. Jacques said.

The town has already met with MP Peter Penashue about the issue and he arranged for a meeting between the town officials and federal government representatives.

The group was set to meet along with provincial government representatives on June 28 and Mr. Jacques said they would stay as long as it took.

Minister of Municipal Affairs Kevin O'Brien confirmed that he was having a look at the project...

Water issues discussed at FCM annual

Continued from cover

Danny Cavanagh, president of CUPE Nova Scotia and a water worker himself, said that investing in training programs for the people who deliver water services is critical, especially when new regulations and rules are implemented. Cavanagh spoke about how his own workplace training help him gain certification he needed but also helped him gain the confidence and skills to become a leader in his community. "These programs work well — and I'm living proof."

CUPE Education Officer Sylvia Sioufi echoed the call for an investment in people. "Skilled workers are key to ensuring we have safe water. Just-in-time training is not enough we must create workplaces where continuous learning is possible."

Joining panelists from CUPE was Fred Wendt, water coordinator at the Ecology Action Centre in Halifax who addressed the impact of climate changes and regulatory changes on the delivery of clean water to communities. He called on the federal government to develop a comprehensive plan to address the challenges. "We need a national water strategy that recognizes water as a public trust not to be squandered."

Moist said many FCM delegates spoke about the importance of keeping Canadian water public, working to reduce bottled water and finding ways to invest in training for workers to ensure a safe and efficient water system.

He said CUPE will be taking a simple message to politicians: "quality public services help build the strong and vibrant communities we all want."



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Built-up fat in sewage pipes blamed for backup in Bedford

■ BY KIM MOAR

HALIFAX NEWS NET

Excessive amounts of cooking fat, oil and grease being poured down the drain is to blame for a sewer backup that damaged several (Nova Scotia) homes in Bedford's Ridgevale subdivision.

Bedford Coun. Tim Outhit, who lives on Ridgevale Drive, was out of the country on a family vacation at the end of February when he started getting calls about a serious problem on his street.

"For the third time in 10 years, there was sewer backup in our neighbourhood," Outhit said.

While Outhit's home was not damaged, sewage backed into all of his neighbour's homes. One of those neighbours, Dan Legge, has had enough.

"It's pretty gross," Legge said of the whole experience. "Of course the basement is finished. This doesn't

happen to people who have unfinished basements."

Halifax Water cleaned out the sewer pipes and determined the backup was the result of a grease and fat buildup, primarily bacon fat.

"Which they said they've never seen the likes of other than in an area where there are restaurants," Outhit said of his residential-only street. "So this is really unusual."

In 2003, Legge's basement was damaged during another sewer backup (blamed on a hockey stick somehow getting into the system) that cost was more than \$30,000 to cleanup and repair. All the flooring and walls had to be removed, and surfaces cleaned before it could be rebuilt.

Damage from this backup is estimated to cost just as much to fix, but this time Legge only has insur-

ance coverage for \$25,000 worth of work.

"This can't happen again," he said. "It's happened twice, and it's weeks and weeks and weeks of disruption to the family. Plus, there's the risk of bacteria exposure from all the crap coming into your house."

Legge said he's having trouble accepting the explanation for the latest backup.

"I struggle with the fact that this neighbourhood has some degree of disproportional fat disposal issues. That boggles my mind." Legge said the failure of the system to handle this problem makes him wonder if a maintenance or design problem is ultimately to blame.

Halifax Water is mailing notices to the 250 to 300 residents in affected sewer system area about disposal do's and don'ts, and hopefully that will "nip this in the bud," Outhit said.

Halifax Water spokesman James Campbell said he hopes residents get the message that pouring fat, oil and grease down the drain is not only a bad idea, it could be a costly mistake for the person doing it.

Campbell said besides contravening Halifax Water rules and regulations, the homeowner could be on the hook to pay for not only damage to his own house caused by a sewage backup, but damage to other properties as well.

While some people may think dumping cooking oil, grease and fat down the drain followed by hot water is OK, once the material hits the cold, underground pipes, it thickens and congeals. The place to dispose of it, Campbell said, is your green bin.

Halifax Water is now using a remote inspection camera to determine which properties the fat, oil and grease came from.

City's water treatment facility may have smaller capacity

■ BY CORY HURLEY

THE WESTERN STAR

[Corner Brook, NL]—While the actual design-build method of the (Corner Brook, Newfoundland & Labrador) city's water treatment plant has changed, preparation work may also lead to a physical change in the facility.

These measures are being taken to save money on the more than \$43-million project, that ballooned to more than \$60 million when tenders were received last year.

Steve May, director of operational services, said the city has been working with the owners engineer, CBCL Limited, to do some further investigation, including looking at the preliminary figures used for the plant design.

One aspect is reducing the capacity of the plant, which depends on water consumption by its users. May said, although Corner Brook remains well over the national average of per household of water consumption, there has been a gradual trending downwards. He attributes that to changes at all levels, from industrial users to residential.

Another encouraging sign is the data collected from water metres placed voluntarily on more than 100 city households. May said those homes are showing water consumption levels the same as the national average. His home is one.

"We are conscious about water, but we are not hypersensitive about it," he said. "To me, that indicates we have the ability to reduce water usage right across the board across the city, and that is

the single biggest factor that can have an impact on the cost of the plant."

He said awareness and education will be key to reducing the amount used by the other approximately 7,900 units in the city. That would lead to a need for a smaller capacity plant.

May said further resolve to leaking from the city's distribution system will also be a significant factor. He suspects some older areas of the city have significant leaking, which has to be fixed.

The next step after that is finalizing the request for qualifications, which is accepting documents from teams who are proposing to get involved to design and build the water treatment plant. May said the request should be issued sometime this month.

In the early fall, May said the city should have a short list of design builders — four teams are being targeted — and then a request for proposals would be issued, hopefully around mid-fall. The actual construction is hoped to begin by late spring or early summer 2012, with hope for the plant to become operational in the fall of 2014.

May said the city is cognizant of inflation in the construction industry, but the hope is the new design/build route — known as the delivery method — will see a more cost-effective way of producing the plant.

The facility is slated to be erected on the western edge of Corner Brook, near the rock cut above Massey Drive and adjacent the Trans-Canada Highway.

Water rates in Amherst to increase

[Amherst, NS]—The cost of using water in Amherst (Nova Scotia) is going up by a few dollars a year.

Amherst is prepared to bring forward its 2011-12 operating and capital budget that includes 7.4 per cent in base charges and a 25.9 per cent increase in the per cubic metre consumption rate.

"This is year two of a three-year UARB order so we are basing our budget on those rates," town treasurer Vince Arbing told council during its committee-of-the-whole meeting on Monday

(June 20).

Arbing said the consumption rate per cubic metre will jump to 41.3 cents from 32.8 cents. He said the average residential customer using 65,000 cubic metres of water per quarter will pay \$12.08 extra per year, or a 5.5 per cent increase.

"It about to \$3.02 a quarter," Arbing told council.

The water rates have been set by the Nova Scotia and Utility and Review Board.

Amherst Daily News



Spring Street in Amherst, Nova Scotia was closed for a bit on the morning of June 2 as crews fixed a water line in front of a vacant home. (Photo: Darrell Cole/ Amherst Daily News)



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Kippens residents raise concerns about proposed sewer system

BY CHRISTOPHER VAUGHAN

THE GEORGIAN

About three dozen Kippens (Newfoundland & Labrador) residents attended a meeting last week (mid-May) to hear about a proposed sewer system for the town.

They listened as Glenn Sharpe, a representative from Abydoz Environmental, a wastewater treatment firm, discussed an upcoming waste treatment feasibility study his company was asked to conduct by the town council.

He said a previous study for the town, conducted by another company, selected an engineered wetland as a preferred waste treatment system for the Town of Kippens.

"Basically the town has asked us to look at this and identify the full costs of what a system would be to put in and what are options to look at to possibly reduce the costs," said Mr. Sharpe.

"Overall, the Kippens design is based on the population. There's approximately 1,800 people living in Kippens, give or take a little bit. We'll be looking at that design plus a growth over 20 or 25 years. So you build this system for growth expansion in the future."

Mr. Sharpe said after collecting sewage and removing plastics and other items, the first stage of a treatment facility is to separate liquid and solid sewage.

In an engineered wetland system, liquid waste then goes through a region of specialized soil and reed plants.

"As (the liquids) flow through the wetlands, the plants transfer air down into the dry zone, the root zone. That air allows bacteria to live below the surface," he said. "Basically the bacteria eats and consumes the waste."

He noted the liquids become cleaner the longer they are kept in the wetland area – and are not released until the liquid reaches an acceptable level of cleanliness.

Mr. Sharpe said solid waste is taken to another treatment area, which he referred to as sludge treatment cells. There reed plants dewater and mineralize the sludge through natural processes.

"We transfer those solids into a compost material which the town can reuse for landscaping purposes or other things – or Abydoz will actually take that and actually use it in our nursery," he said.

If the town were to select an Abydoz system, the company would provide a 75-year warranty, but Mr. Sharpe noted the town would be responsible for the operational costs of the system during its lifetime.

"The longer a system works ... the less you have to pay to replace it. So overall, it costs you less over the lifetime."

SEWER LINES

As there is currently no sewer collection system in Kippens, a town-wide sewer system would have to be phased in to move sewerage to a treatment site or sites.

Mr. Sharpe said there were three main options for the Town of Kippens. One being a centralized treatment centre, which brings all sewerage together and treats it in one place. Another option is de-centralized treatment, with different collection and treatment sites located in the town. The third option is expansion of the nearby Stephenville Abydoz wetland system, bringing sewerage to that town's facility for treatment.

Mr. Sharpe said all three options would be looked at independently, with costs of each estimated in the feasibility study. The town would then decide which would be the best option to pursue.

Among the residents raising questions was Norma Childs, who asked about the costs associated with the sewer system for individual homeowners. Mr. Sharpe said full costs wouldn't be known until the study is completed and the town decides how it wants to pro-

ceed.

Resident Martha Wall asked if a wetlands site in Kippens would have a foul smell similar to that coming from the Stephenville wetland facility.

Mr. Sharpe said problems with the Stephenville facility were currently being addressed, noting open holding tanks were causing the odor problems and not the actual wetlands.

Another resident asked about government funding for the project. Councillor Debbie Brake-Patten said the town was actively trying to engage the government on the issue.

"We have to impress upon the government that yes, we want this system – we need it because we are continuing to grow," she said. "And as we continue to grow we have to take care of our waste. Septics down the road will not cut it."

Other questions included the location of a treatment site and what happens to septic tanks once sewer lines are in place. Mr. Sharpe said these and other concerns would be dealt with in the study.

Councillor Brake-Patten noted once the study is completed, another public meeting will be held to discuss the results and to get public input on how to proceed.

Municipality asks province for "reasonable approach" to wastewater costs

STAFF-CAPE BRETON POST

[Sydney, NS]—The Cape Breton Regional Municipality has requested the provincial (Nova Scotia) government provide a "reasonable approach" to funding the Canadawide municipal wastewater effluent strategy before the municipality commits anymore money.

A (May) letter that will be forwarded to the Department of Environment says the province "does not properly understand the capital requirements for the CBRM to comply" with the federally mandated guidelines for treated effluent, as directed under the Fisheries Act.

Eight separate wastewater treatment facilities will need to be built over the next decade at a cost of \$425 million because those areas of the CBRM fall under the high risk level category for raw effluent discharge.

It also includes the construction of sewage collector systems, storm sewer separation chambers and effluent outfalls for each of the new facilities.

Another eight facilities classified as medium to low risk level in its effluent discharge will have to be upgraded and built within 20 to 30 years.

The total cost of the CBRM wastewater strategy is

currently estimated at \$454 million.

Yearly operating cost for each facility is pegged at approximately \$10 million a year.

The CBRM doesn't plan to move forward with the environmental risk assessments, estimated to cost \$2-3 million over the next few years, for each wastewater system in the municipality until the province moves on its request for a funding program.

"It is now incumbent upon both the province and federal governments to develop a realistic funding formula to enable the process to continue," Mayor John Morgan said in the letter.

He said the capital borrowing costs represent an increase in the CBRM's long-term debt from \$106 million to \$631 million over 10 years.

In order to pay those costs under the general tax rate, the mayor said the property tax rate would need to be hiked by 66 per cent.

The strategy indicated municipalities are expected to use "own source revenue" accompanied by a mixture of federal infrastructure funding, provincial loans and "other innovative funding mechanisms" such as public-private partnerships to pay for the wastewater treatment plants.

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Exhibitors get ready for the MPWWA's Annual Training Seminar Trade Show. (Photo: Heather Jones)



Dave Williams of American Marsh Pumps took part in the MPWWA's Annual Training Seminar Trade Show. His company's pumps are distributed in Canada by Kinecor/Peacock. (Photo: Heather Jones)

Wastewater monitoring equipment gets funding

Innovation PEI has offered assistance to eight new innovative and commercially promising projects that will impact the growth and development of the Island economy.

Developed as part of the Island Prosperity Strategy, the Development and Commercialization Fund contributes a maximum of \$100,000 towards products that are near the commercialization stage.

One of the eight companies, Engineering Technologies Canada Ltd. of Stratford, received funding to develop and commercialize its Intelligent Valve Monitor (IVM6000) and related electronic monitoring equipment for on-site wastewater management systems.

The IVM6000 is a monitoring and data log-

ging device that provides verification that sewage treatment systems are functioning properly.

The monitor can detect debris, flow interruptions, exfiltration and air pockets. It also senses if valves skip or are stuck on an outlet, erratic cycling and uneven zone distribution.

The company website says it takes only 10 minutes to install or retrofit the IVM6000. The monitor does not require any modification to inlet or outlet piping nor extra sensors.

For more information contact Engineering Technologies Canada Ltd. at the Stratford Business Park, 902-628-1705 or 1-888-747-7645; on-line at IVM@engtech.ca or visit the website: www.engtech.ca.

H2O Water Assistance Program established

The H2O-Help to Others, Water Assistance Program, developed by Halifax Water in partnership with The Salvation Army, was implemented April 1.

The H2O Fund assists low-income households in an emergency, especially those with no other resources available. It assists with the cost of residential water and wastewater.

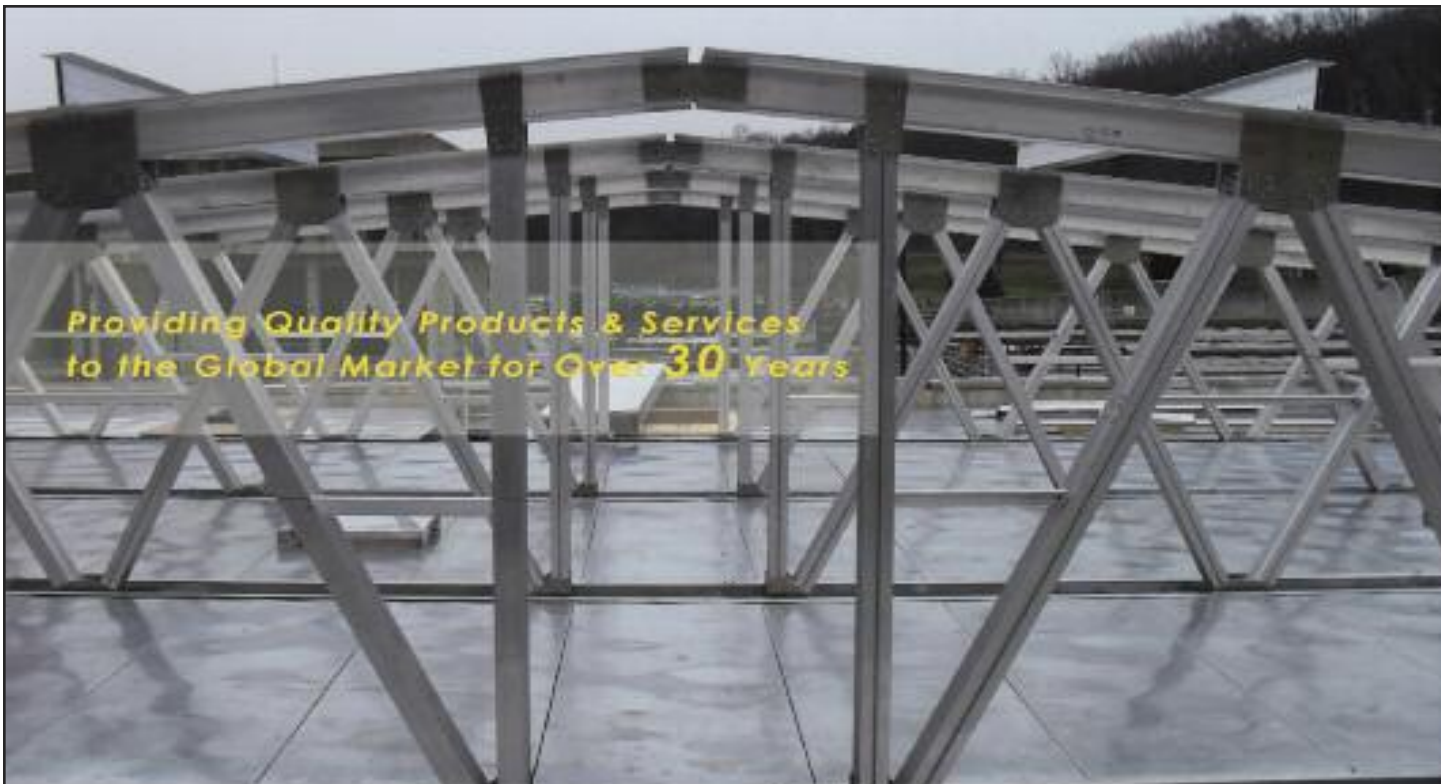
Halifax Water is providing annual base funding of \$25,000 with the potential to reach \$75,000 through an employee contribution program. The H2O Fund is fully administered by The Salvation Army.

Water rates escalate

Despite opposition from town council, water rates in Canso have escalated by over 100 per cent.

The Nova Scotia Utilities & Review Board approved the increase that jumped from \$352 to \$724 effective May 1. In 2012-13 the rate will climb an additional 0.8%.

There are four significant leaks in the town's water system.



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