



Maritime Provinces Water & Wastewater REPORT

VOLUME 21 / NUMBER 1 \$3 PM# 40064924 JANUARY 2014



NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Todd Richard
Chairperson of the MPWWA

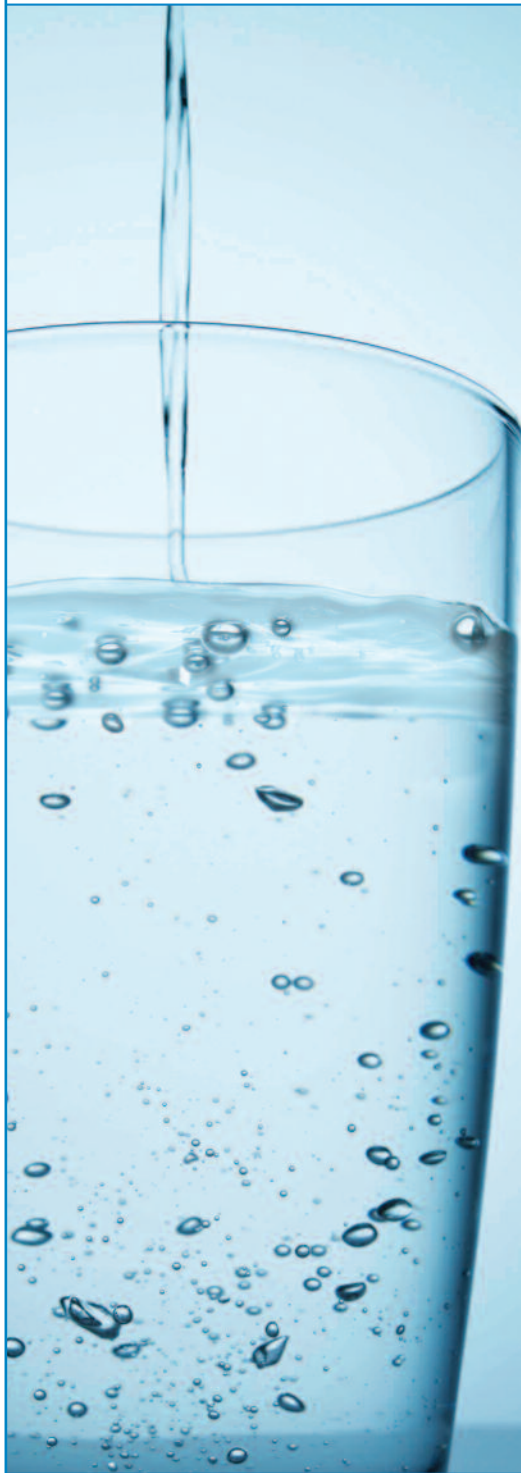
As we head into the new year and put 2013 behind us the MPWWA would like to wish everyone and their families a safe and happy 2014.

A great deal of effort goes into providing education, resources and the exchange of knowledge in support of operator excellence, I would like to focus this column on the importance and the benefits of 'Operator Certification'. As many of you may know, this month New Brunswick enacted the designation of Water and Wastewater Operators Certification under the Apprenticeship and Occupational Certification Act. Once a voluntary process it has now become the "norm" for certification to be mandatory along with a qualification process that takes into account education, operating experience and ongoing training for certification renewal. New Brunswick looks like it is moving towards this model, however, the certification is only under a plant permit to operate and currently only required for one operator. But hopefully it will continue to take steps to bring certification requirements in line in comparison to other provinces.

Operator certification is critical to protect the public health and the environment and has been identified in many reports and recommendations including the most recognized Walkerton Inquiry Report. Certified operators are valuable resources in the management of water and wastewater facilities.

There are many benefits of Certification. Obviously it maximizes the potential performance of water and wastewater plants and protects the utility's infrastructure investment. It provides utility owners, municipalities, the general public, and regulatory agencies with the assurance that a certified operator has the experience, knowledge, abilities and judgment necessary to competently perform his/her job. It gives an operator a professional designation and achievement recognition when his/her certification level increases. Increased productivity is a benefit that's not as obvious. So are the confidence and motivation its gives accredited operators as they increase their knowledge and classification levels.

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Saint John's 'Safe, Clean Drinking Water Project' generating lots of interest

■ BY KATHY JOHNSON

Plans by the City of Saint John to construct a new 100-million litre per day drinking water treatment plant and distribution system has suppliers, developers, consultants and contractors throughout New Brunswick sharpening their pencils.

The 'Safe, Clean Drinking Water Project' is a public-private partnership (P3), which could carry a \$230 million price tag. Funding from the provincial and federal governments for the project totalling \$114.6 million was announced on Nov. 22.

Saint John is wasting no time moving forward with the project, hosting an information session for suppliers, developers, consultants and contractors interested in the project on Dec. 10.

"The project is generating tremendous interest," said Dean Price. The City Project Manager estimated at least 120 companies and businesses were represented at the information meeting. "Pretty well everybody in the water industry was there."

The purpose of the meeting was to advise interested firms on the proposed scope, schedule, procurement plan and status of the project. "The whole idea is to give fair and equal access to project," Price said.

In addition to the water treatment plant, three new 11-million litre storage reservoirs and 15 other water distribution transmission system improvements are also part of the plan.

Price said the proposed scope of the project will be twofold. Under the proposed P3 arrangement, project risks (including design, construction, financing, operations and maintenance) will be transferred to a private partner, which will bear responsibility for any cost overruns and delays. "Basically everything inside the plant site will be financed by a P-3 company and everything out-



The federal and New Brunswick governments are making a combined investment of \$114.6 million to the City of Saint John Safe Clean Drinking Water project. In the photo are from left: Premier David Alward, Saint John MP Rodney Weston and Saint John Mayor Mel Norton. (Photo: Communications New Brunswick)

side by the city," Price explained.

As proposed, once completed the water treatment plant and reservoirs will be owned by the City but operated and maintained by a P-3 partner under a 30-year contract. The City will own, operate and maintain the distribution centers and lines.

Price said Saint John is still in the process of ironing out the smaller details of the project and putting together tender document information. "There's a lot of work going on behind the scenes to do with procurement," he said. "It's going to take time. There's a lot of technical work involved."

Request for proposals will be called this year. "We're going to have a signed agreement in 2015."

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ADDRESS LABEL HERE

Windsor commits to not processing fracking wastewater

■ **BY ASHLEY THOMPSON**
HANTS JOURNAL

There will be hoops to jump through if anyone hopes to have fracking wastewater disposed of through the (Nova Scotia) Town of Windsor's wastewater treatment facility again in the future.

At their regular monthly meeting Oct. 22, Windsor's town council unanimously accepted a Committee of the Whole recommendation calling on the elected officials to make their stance on the treatment of fracking waste known.

The original recommendation council considered suggests "a statement be made that no fracking water will be processed through the Town's

wastewater treatment plant until there is an extensive public consultation and full consideration given by the Department of Environment, Province of Nova Scotia protocols and procedures to address fracking water and the eventual disposal of this byproduct through wastewater treatment plant facilities."

Mayor Paul Beazley asked that the motion read "eventual safe disposal."

"If they don't come up with a safe proposal, why would we do it?" the mayor asked.

Coun. John Bregante expressed doubt that fracking wastewater can be treated safely, and noted that the province put a stop to the practice for a reason.

Council agreed the word safe should be added

to the motion to drive their point home.

"I think that with technology they'll definitely find a safe way to do it at some point in the future if they decide they're going to do it but I don't think it's incumbent upon the municipalities to decide how to do it safely," said Beazley.

"The intent is to put the onus on the province to create a safe way of disposing of this water and to prove it to us," he added.

About seven million litres of brine water, commonly referred to as fracking wastewater, was

processed at the Town of Windsor's sewage treatment plant between March 2010 and August 2011. The treated brine water was flushed into the Minas Basin.

The Town of Windsor received about \$100,000 for treating the brine water, but became the subject of much scrutiny when it was later revealed that the process was stopped once town officials were informed naturally occurring radioactive materials (NORMs) were found in the fracking wastewater.

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Stellarton plans to hire water treatment plant operator

■ BY CHRISTOPHER CAMERON

THE NEWS

[Stellarton, NS]— The Town of Stellarton (Nova Scotia) has elected to hire a full-time operator for their water treatment plant.

At Monday's meeting (Nov. 4) town council voted unanimously to create the position.

They will post the job once final details and expectations for the position have been finalized. The recommendation for a full-time employee came from the water committee meeting last week.

When addressing council, town engineer Tony Addis said if council wished to go through with the recommendation the water utility would advertise a Level 3 water treatment plant operator. He also added that they should hire a suitable candidate as soon as possible so they can be on site when the installation of the instrumentation for feeding coagulant is taking place.

The funds for this position will come out of the water commission budget according to Mayor Joe Gennoe. It's unknown at this time what the salary of

the position will be as the final job responsibilities and description have yet to be drawn up.

Coun. George Megeney asked Addis what they would do to cover problems that fall out outside the full-time operators expected hours of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Friday. Addis said they will continue to use the part-time operators like they have since 1988.

The plant has alarms that sound when there are issues, which alerts the operators so they can go to the plant to address the issue. There is someone on call 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Although council did unanimously approve the creation of the position, Addis did say that in visiting other plants he had encountered operators who "had their feet up on the desk" when he entered their control room. He also raised concerns about completely operating the plant remotely because operators can see and hear what issues there may be as opposed to reading a screen off-site.

There is no specific timeframe on when the position will be posted, but it's expected once the details surrounding the position are set in stone it will be advertised as soon as possible.



South-end Halifax resident Fred Lordly holds a glass of tap water in front of his residence on Nov. 4. (Photo: Jeff Harper/Metro Halifax)

Three-month-long dry spell ends

■ BY GEORDON OMAND

METRO HALIFAX

Three months after being left high and dry by the municipal water utility, an elderly man living in Halifax's south end once again has running water (Nov. 4) in his home, thanks in large part to the charity of a local business.

Schooner Excavation Ltd. said it would help turn the taps back on for 82-year-old Fred Lordly, who had been living without water at his house on Emscote Drive since July 29.

"I heard about (Lordly's situation) in the media a few months ago," said Schooner president and co-owner, Darrell Gallagher. "I thought it would be a nice thing to do, to help him out."

Halifax Water turned off the water to Lordly's 45-year-old house following a longstanding dispute over unlawfully criss-crossed piping.

According to the utility, the sewer and storm water pipes were improperly installed when Lordly built his house in 1968, meaning the octogenarian was illegally discharging untreated wastewater into the Northwest Arm.

"We tried to work with Mr. Lordly for two years to

no avail," said James Campbell, a spokesman with Halifax Water.

Ultimate responsibility for these types of repairs lies with the homeowner, he said.

And of the seven homeowners in the area with the same piping problems, Campbell said Lordly was the only one who refused to pay for the work to be done.

"We take no pleasure in disconnecting anyone's water service," said Campbell. "(But) we have regulations we have to follow and we're obliged to follow them."

"I feel it was a lot of nonsense, a lot of nonsense," said Lordly. "A lot of waste of their time and a lot of misery for me."

Gallagher estimated the value of the donated repair work – which he anticipated to be finished this weekend – at somewhere between \$4,000 and \$10,000.

Lordly said he was very appreciative for the excavator's help, but said he ultimately believes the city failed him.

"Everyone should fight (for) what's right," said the long-time Halifax resident. "When they think they're right they should fight to the end."

"And I was prepared to fight to the end."

Murphy named Employee of the Year

Summerside Water Pollution Control Centre Waste Treatment Superintendent Frank Murphy is the Prince Edward Island City's 2013 'Employee of the Year.'

Murphy was recognized Oct. 9 at the Summerside Chamber of Commerce's 20th Business Excellence Awards night.

A City employee for 27 years, he started with the

electrical department as a diesel mechanic and electrician in 1984 and moved to the wastewater treatment plant in 1994. He became supervisor of the Summerside wastewater treatment facility in 1995.

Murphy presently holds certification in Water Distribution Class II, Wastewater Collection Class II and Wastewater Treatment Class III. He is also a Level 4 Power Engineer.

Wells for Steady Brook

In December Newfoundland & Labrador committed \$391,000 to a water project in Steady Brook.

The funding will be used to develop a number of wells in the community that will serve as an alternate water supply to back up the current surface water supply.

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Publications Mail Reg # 7145
Return undeliverable addresses to:
TC • Media 1888 Brunswick Street,
Suite 609, Halifax, N.S., B3J 3J8
Sales Manager: Sue Kosloski
Editor: Heather Jones
Designer: David Schaffner
Sales Executive: Scott Higgins
Circulation: Margaret Wallace
Traffic: Jodie Purchase

Mailed under Canada Post Publications Mail
Agreement No. 40064924

Maritime Provinces Water & Wastewater Report
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MPWWA PROFILE: *Nigel Crouse*

Every issue, the MPWWR shines a spotlight on a MPWWA member making a difference in the industry. Nigel Crouse is the focus of our January Issue.



Nigel Crouse finds supervising the Mill Cove Water Pollution Centre rewarding and challenging

■ BY ANDY WALKER

As the supervisor for the region's only secondary treatment plant using pure oxygen activated sludge process, Nigel Crouse admits it can sometimes be challenging when confronted with a problem.

The Mill Cove Water Pollution Centre, which falls under the umbrella of Halifax Water, services 55,000 customers in the Bedford-Sackville area of the region's largest municipality. The pure oxygen system was installed in 1996, due in part to a limited availability of land.

"There are a couple of systems on the Eastern Seaboard of the United States and one in Edmonton. There is certainly nobody that is really close."

Crouse hasn't had any major difficulties since he became supervisor two-and-a-half years ago. He pointed out that is largely due to a staff of four process technicians, one laboratory analyst and a general worker who "know the system like the back of their hand."

Crouse, who graduated from the water resources technology program at the Nova Scotia Community College in 2002, explained the pure oxygen system decreases the aeration process from six to eight hours down to less than two.

The supervisor began his career doing a 10-month stint working as a technician in a microbiology laboratory doing clinical research for the Capital Health Region. The project he was helping with was cited in a research paper published in the *Chicago Journal of Medicine*.

"That was a really cool experience," Crouse said. "It is something not many people involved in the water and wastewater field can claim."

His next stop was more in line with his training—a process technician with the Truro Water Department. He spent seven-and-a-half years with

the town before moving to Halifax, where he worked as a process technician before assuming his current post.

Crouse has Class Three certification for both water and wastewater and one of his major goals for the next five years is to obtain his Class Four wastewater certification.

The plant supervisor is a firm believer in the Maritime Provinces Water and Wastewater Association and has been a member since he started working in Truro. He has profited immensely from the training offered by the association, but for him the networking opportunities are the biggest benefit.

While his system may be different, Crouse said the Mill Cove facility shares many similar issues and concerns with other waste treatment facilities in the region. "The biggest benefit is often just finding out you are not the only person dealing with a specific issue."

Nigel Crouse and his wife, Tia, are new parents. Their first child, Aria, will be celebrating her first birthday this month (January), something he is looking forward to immensely.

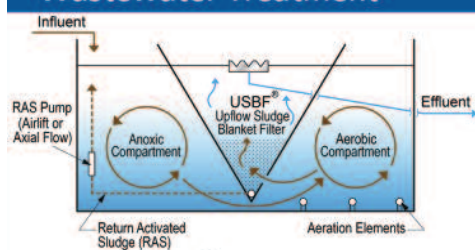
A native of Chester Basin, Crouse has been a member of the Chester Golf Club since childhood and admits to having "golf withdrawal" during the winter months. He and Tia have a cottage in the South Shore community of Greenfield, where they spend as much time as possible during the summer—"we just love it." The rest of the year they live in Tantaloon.

As for the future, Crouse is already working on a number of energy and cost saving initiatives he hopes to be able to implement at Mill Cove. While he is still a relative newcomer in the field with 10 year's experience, "I am pretty happy where I am right now."

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NOTE FROM THE CHAIR

Continued from cover

I recently read that individuals who carry a professional certification are far less likely to become injured on the job and therefore carry a high safety rating. This creates a safety culture that catches on in the workplace.

So be proud of your certification and continue to increase your knowledge. It is not just a matter of compliance but rather a positive move for career development. If there is an area or a certain type of training you are looking for please contact your zone rep and let them know. The MPWWA is here to collectively help operators throughout the Maritimes.

Register early for the "MPWWA 2014 Annual Training Seminar" that will be held in Halifax, April 13th-16th. Led by our Conference Chair Craig Gerrior the seminar is guaranteed to be jam-packed with informative workshops, sessions and great networking opportunities you won't want to miss. Look for our detailed Seminar Brochure and registration package due out shortly.

. Todd Richard
Chairperson for the MPWWA

Committee to include First Nations rep

[Truro, NS]— A water protection advisory committee being established by Colchester County (Nova Scotia) in Debert will include a First Nations representative in its primary membership.

"This is part of that co-operation we need in Debert," Councillor Doug MacInnes said, of the inclusion of someone from the First Nations community to the committee.

"I definitely think this is a step forward in the right direction for co-operation with the First Nations..."

The municipality initially approved the terms of reference for the Debert advisory committee last January but brought the item back to council on Thursday (Nov. 14) to make the adjustment to its terms of reference.

Other members who will sit on the committee include: the mayor or deputy mayor; the area councillor; one citizen member representing industry and commercial establishments; one citizen member to repre-

sent area residents; a representative from the N.S. Department of Environment; the municipal directors from the departments of Public Works and Community Development.

Don Geldhart of Debert is to serve as the representative for local residents while Darren Rogers, facility manager at Kohler Windows will serve as the representative for commercial and industrial interests. The First Nations representative has yet to be named.

Truro Daily News

Water rate up in Bathurst

The price of water in Bathurst, New Brunswick is going up 10 per cent in 2014.

The increase—about \$4/month per household—will provide the city with an additional \$425,000.

According to the *Northern Light*, Bathurst's water account lost almost a quarter-of-a-million dollars in 2013.

Inaccurate water meters were responsible for some of the lost revenue, City Manager André Doucet told council in late November.

He requested Bathurst designate \$50,000 of its 2014 (and future) operating budget toward replacing older meters that were only "between 80 and 90 per cent" accurate.

City Engineer Todd Pettigrew told council the price of a meter was between \$400-\$500 (plus installation). He said with \$50,000 Bathurst could replace 50 or 60 meters annually.



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Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island Mayor Clifford Lee and Councillor Edward Rice, chair of Water and Sewer Utility gathered at the new wellfield site in Miltonvale recently with MLAs representing the area, city councillors, Miltonvale Community Council members and city staff. (Photo: Submitted)

Charlottetown takes new approach for water supply to new subdivisions

BY DAVE STEWART
THE GUARDIAN

The water taps are still on for developers in Charlottetown, (Prince Edward Island) says the chairman of the water and sewer utility committee.

Coun. Eddie Rice told The Guardian that developers aren't being shut off from the city's water supply but the municipality has implemented a new approach to ensure enough water is available to any new subdivisions.

"The City of Charlottetown is open for development — but with options," Rice said. "Our first responsibility is to manage the resources we have; to be responsible; to do it in a responsible way, and

that's not to shut off water from anybody."

Coun. Rob Lantz, chairman of planning, said recently (October) he was concerned that development has all but ground to a halt because of a policy in the water and sewer utility department not to allow new developments access to the city's water supply.

Rice said there is no policy, explaining that staff with the utility met with council back in June and presented them with four options. Council decided that, until the city's five new wells in Miltonvale Park are pumping water by 2016, developers will be required to construct a small supplemental water supply within new subdivisions.

Continued on page 8



Tyler Dillman.



Marie-Andree Legere.

MPWWA Educational bursaries awarded

The MPWWA was very happy to award two \$1000 bursaries this year.

As a training provider the association wants to be able to assist students further their education and the MPWWA is committed to do this annually.

The winners for the 2013 bursaries were Tyler Dillman and Marie-Andree Legere.

Tyler, who is currently attending Acadia University, was very appreciative of receiving the bursary. "I want to thank the MPWWA for the generous donation to help me through my education."

Tyler's dad, a member of our association, works

in the Town of Kentville.

Marie-Andree, who is currently attending the University of Ottawa, was equally thrilled to receive the news about winning the bursary. The Psychology PhD student stated, "This money will help greatly in assisting with the costs of being a university student."

Marie-Andree's father, Nicolas Legere, has been a long serving employee with Village of Caraquet.

If you know of anybody interested in applying for the MPWWA 2014 bursaries please check out the links at www.mpwwa.ca

Fluoride decision delayed

Saint John approved its \$39 million water and sewer budget on Dec. 9. All users in the New Brunswick city will see a 7.1 per cent rate increase (\$1,080 per household) in 2014.

But council did not make a decision about retaining the fluoridation program that costs about \$177,000 annually.

According to *CBC News*, Water Commissioner

Bill Edwards told council that under 1% of the city's fluoridated water is being consumed by residents.

But Councillor Shirley McAlary requested that the decision be put off until city administrators had a "full understanding" of the issue.

Health officials will make a presentation on fluoride to council early this year.

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The Happy Valley-Goose Bay Wastewater Treatment Facility opened Oct. 24. (Photo: Wayne Wall)

Wastewater Treatment Facility opens

■ BY HEATHER JONES

The new \$23.5 million Happy Valley-Goose Bay Wastewater Treatment Facility opened Oct. 24.

The state-of-the-art 7.5-hectare plant is located on a parcel of land north of Mud Lake Road in the Labrador town. It includes a collection system to intercept the wastewater flow from sewage outfalls, and a wastewater lagoon system to treat and disinfect the effluent before discharging it to the environment.

Construction that got underway in September 2011 involved two lift stations and a force main, a building containing a screening and grit removal system, aerated lagoons for secondary treatment of wastewater

and an ultraviolet disinfection system.

A section of the new facility will be named the Gerald Dyson Building.

The late Mr. Dyson was a longtime resident who regularly attended town council meeting and promoted the benefits of a wastewater facility, HV-GB Town Clerk Hayward Broomfield explained.

He said the Town Council of the day decided to name the facility in Mr. Dyson's memory.

The federal government invested up to \$7.25 million for the project through the Canada Strategic Infrastructure Fund (CSIF) and the Gas Tax Fund. The province contributed \$7.7 million through its investment in CSIF and the town contributed \$7.49 million.

Berwick considering water system

Town of Berwick (Nova Scotia) staff are now researching the ins and outs of developing a municipal water system for the town.

The issue was one of many raised by developers who attended the developers breakfast forum hosted in early December by the town.

Berwick operates a municipal wastewater service, but all properties in town are on a well water system.

Developers reported the quality of well water is not consistent throughout the town, prompting them to ask the town to look into developing a water utility.

Register/Advertiser

Sewer system to get attention

■ BY TC MEDIA

JOURNAL PIONEER

[Tignish, PEI]-- Tignish finance committee chair Ed Gallant wants to revisit a 2011 engineering report to see if the proposed plan for the (Prince Edward Island) community's lagoon is still viable.

"I think we need to keep moving forward," Gallant suggested to fellow councilors. He said the report needs to be looked at again to see what the next step should be.

Council chair Allan McInnis proposed setting up a lagoon committee early in the New Year to take a fresh look at what needs to be done.

Gallant agreed to sit on the committee. He suggested one of the biggest concerns the committee will have to tackle is acquisition of land for a new lagoon. McInnis, however, suspected there might still be room to maneuver with the old system, suggesting there are less people currently served on the central sewer than indicated in the 2011 report.

Northern Peninsula projects

In late November Newfoundland & Labrador invested \$243,000 in water projects on the Northern Peninsula.

Port au Choix received \$168,000 to repair its existing water storage reservoir.

Port Saunders received \$50,000 for a study that will investigate options for the town to address its water

quality and low pressure problems.

Hawke's Bay received \$25,000 for a structural assessment of its water storage reservoir.

In December the province committed \$96,000 to St. Lunaire-Griquet to support the town's work to improve its sewer system.

Moncton budget set

The Greater Moncton Sewerage Commission's 2014 budget was set in November.

According to the *Times & Transcript*, both GMSC's 2.5 per cent rate increase and its strategic plan for 2014-2018 were supported by Moncton, Riverview and Dieppe councils.

The 2.5% increase, that's equivalent to \$5/household in the New Brunswick city, will generate an estimated \$12.3 million in revenue this year.

GMSC plans to invest the surplus \$5,593,045 into a fund to ensure it meets federal infrastructure requirements for 2020.

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Stellarton approves \$120K maintenance job for water treatment facility

The town of Stellarton (Nova Scotia) is going to be replacing \$120,000 of membrane modules used in its water treatment facility.

"Some of the modules have reached the end of their effective life and it's necessary to replace 120 modules, Town Engineer Tony Addis explained.

He said the replacement was included in the three-year-capital budget for the water utility with \$60,000 allowed in the 2014/15 budget and \$120,000 allowed in the 2015/16 budget. He requested those amounts be switched so that the \$120,000 amount could be used to fund the modules in the next fiscal year.

The modules take around 24 weeks to come in after their ordered, so with council's approval which was given, they will arrive around April.

Asked in council (Oct. 10), by councillor George Megeny if this was the first replacement, Addis said that modules had to be replaced after the first commission attempt failed, but it's the first time since the facility has been properly working which was in 2008.

"I was anticipating we might get 10 years out of them," Megeny said. "They do have a warranty which is a prorated warranty over 10 years so we should get some benefit of the warranty."

He said the membranes will be tested for why they

failed and then the warranty allowance would be determined.

Councillor Judith MacLellan asked about why the membranes would have failed sooner.

"The coagulant when it was not optimized was causing bad fouling of the membranes which I think has contributed to the life being shorter than if we had optimized coagulation," Addis explained. "I had to give it considerable thought whether to replace the 120 modules prior to optimization of the coagulation but to be honest with you I don't think we should delay because we're not going to get the new modules for another six months. I think if we left it any longer, we could be having difficulty supplying the necessary amount of water for the town."

He does believe the new modules will be better than the previous ones.

"The new modules we'll be getting are an upgraded and, I'm hoping, a better set of membranes," Addis said. "They've obviously been continuing to do their research for development. They've got better materials and better methods for making these now so hopefully they'll get more life out of the replacement modules than these ones."

The News

Halifax council gives pass on storm sewer costs to Cow Bay residents

BY RUTH DAVENPORT
METRO HALIFAX

The Cow Bay Road (Nova Scotia) residents who were facing big bills to cover the cost of a deep storm sewer will now not have to pay anything.

Halifax regional council approved a new funding formula for the project Tuesday (Dec. 2) after Coun. Bill Karsten argued the project will only affect a small number of the 100 residents who would be stuck with the bill.

"About 75 people are not affected," he said. "In fact, their area... isn't even the area that would be upgraded, so they would still be left with a ditch, having to pay \$5,000 for a deep stormwater system on Cow Bay Road."

A funding formula approved in February split the cost of the project between residents, HRM and the Halifax Regional Water Commission.

However, Cow Bay residents rejected the \$4.4 million project when the estimated costs climbed to \$14,000 per property.

Karsten asked city staffers to revisit the funding

formula, saying residents shouldn't have to pay for a problem not of their making.

However, he rejected the proposal for resident contributions of up to \$5,000 and replaced with one that eliminated the resident share altogether.

The motion received strong support, particularly from councillors whose constituents are also plagued by recurring flooding.

"Stormwater management is now more pervasive than fires, and yet we put fire hydrants and we supply fire departments," said Coun. Steve Craig.

Coun. Reg Rankin opposed the new formula, noting warnings that it could cost the municipality up to \$1.65 million a year for stormwater projects, and delay the ability to fund such projects.

"Let us be very clear about this. This will make a precedent," he said. "All other projects in HRM will be looking for exactly the same thing."

The motion directs staff to work with Halifax Water over the next two years to determine a capital program with permanent funding options for stormwater infrastructure.

It passed, 15-2.

No centralized wastewater system for Belledune

Eleven years ago Belledune, New Brunswick explored the possibility of building a municipal wastewater treatment facility.

Village mayor Ron Bourque told the Northern Light in January that he and other residents opposed the user fee and the lagoon location pro-

posed in 2003.


He said Belledune is unlike other municipalities in the province that will have budget problems because of aging wastewater infrastructure.

"That's not to say that we're not without a couple problems here and there but when I look at the

future of what's going to transpire with many of these municipalities with these systems, they are going to be financially strapped to find the funding to be able to do the repairs, the maintenance and the upkeep that is required to make these functional," he told the newspaper.

The mayor noted there is a centralized system in the village's industrial area. He said in 2014 water rates for homeowners on that system will increase by \$300 because start-up funding is expiring.

Bourque said individual wells and septic systems are more cost efficient for Belledune.



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Process changes for NB operator certifications

The process for achieving operator certifications in water and wastewater occupations in New Brunswick is now being delivered through the Department of Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour (PETL) under the Apprenticeship and Occupational Certification (AOC) Act.

The change, which came into effect on Jan. 1, was made at the request of the Department of Environment and Local Government, as the certification process through the Atlantic Canada Water and Wastewater Association Voluntary Certification Program (ACWWAVCP) is no longer available.

The transition has no impact on certifications previously issued under the ACWWAVCP. They will remain valid and will continue to be recognized. Nor are there any requirements to update certificates to have one that is issued by PETL.

When PETL assumes responsibilities for certification, clients will receive a Certificate of Qualification issued under the AOC Act. Certified clients will also receive a photo identification card as proof of certification. If an individual requires a replace-

ment certificate, they will be issued a Certificate of Qualification (including a new number) based on the certification they received through ACWWAVCP. The original issue date of the certification will not change.

Processes and forms are in place for clients wanting to challenge the certification exam in a number of PETL occupations designated under the AOC Act. These processes and forms are similar to those used for water and wastewater certification, however there are some differences. Much of the same information is collected but the forms will be different.

In addition to the change in some of the forms and processes to align with the other occupations offered through PETL, there are also set fees established under the Fees Act.

The same exams currently used for certification will continue to be used once PETL takes over responsibility for certification in this occupation. In the future and in consultation with industry stakeholders, consideration may be given to updating or revising the examinations if deemed necessary.

New approach

Continued from page 5

Construction of the water distribution system within the new roads will include fire hydrants and water service laterals to all properties. In addition, the developer is responsible to construct a small supplemental water supply well within the new subdivision to supply the expected domestic water demands of the approved subdivision. Once the new well field is activated the utility will decommission the supplemental well supply.

"Nothing passed as a bylaw. There's nothing carved in stone. There's no policy. We gave (councillors options) and council was fully aware of (what those options were)."

Rice said two developments, Windsor Park and a larger one in the neighbourhood of East Royalty, were of most concern to council.

"It's a huge development," Rice said of the lat-

ter, further noting that by the time those projects are complete and people are living there the city's new well field will be ready.

Still, the city wants to exercise caution in the meantime.

"We are taking every precaution to protect our present residents but by no way is this shutting the door to future development."

Rice said staff from the utility and the planning department will be meeting soon to go over the temporary approach.

The utility chairman stresses that each and every development application will be assessed on its own merits and that the ultimate decision in every case rests with council.

"We're going to be careful to manage those until we see ourselves through to 2016. We don't want (water) shortages (and) we're not going to have shortages."

Shelburne water rate hearing postponed by review board

■ BY GREG BENNETT
THE COASTGUARD

A water rate hearing set for Wednesday (*Dec. 18) for the Town of Shelburne has been rescheduled until Jan. 15 due to impending winter weather.

The Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board was to consider proposed water rate hikes after a recent water rate study showed that without major changes, the Town's utility would be almost \$1-million in debt within two years.

The increase would see the annual charge for an average household rise more than 70 per cent... from \$820 to \$1400 a year.

All municipal utilities in Nova Scotia are expected to operate self sufficiently. But without a major increase in rates, the water study painted a bleak fiscal picture for Shelburne's water utility. That study, commissioned earlier this year and prepared by G.A. Isenor Consulting, recommended a series of rate increases over the next three years.

Increases in base charges and water usage charges ranging from 50 per cent to more than 70 per cent

for all users would come into effect on Jan. 1.

Smaller rate increases would take place on April 1, 2014 and again in April 2015.

The utility posted a deficit of nearly \$200,000 last year because water consumption has declined while still dealing with major debt servicing costs from the Water and Mowatt Street line extension project.

That 2011 water line extension could have potentially added 120 customers to the system. The project was initially launched based on projections that 84 new customers would hook up.


The tenders for the project came in far over

budget, costs that were borne completely by the town utility.

Then, after the project was complete, efforts to convince new potential customers to hook up were a failure and as yet only 21 new users have been added because of the extension.

While there are hopes that rates can be decreased in the future if more large industrial customers come on board.





While the Town is expected to submit evidence, there are no public witnesses scheduled for the hearing.






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The Prince Edward Island Town of Stratford's sewage treatment lagoon. (Photo: © The Guardian)

Stratford sucked muck this fall

■ BY NIGEL ARMSTRONG

THE GUARDIAN

Stratford (Prince Edward Island) opted to suck muck this fall as it deals both in the short and long term with its sewage treatment system.

The monthly meeting of council heard Wednesday (Oct. 9) that a consultant's report on the lagoon recommended removing sludge this year from the two watery cells that make up the treatment lagoon. That work is expected to begin soon.

Councillor Emile Gallant, chair of Stratford's infrastructure committee told council that this year's utility repair and maintenance budget is \$119,000 but the sludge cleaning is estimated to cost up to \$160,000.

He asked for and received an increase the Stratford Utilities maintenance budget to \$279,900 for 2013.

"The removal of the sludge will improve the treatment process and will reduce the risk of odour during the spring turn over," said Gallant.

He said that sludge removal is a regular activity that is done every four to six years based on yearly measurements. The consultant hired to look at the short-term demands and maintenance of the Stratford

sewage system recommended the sludge be removed this year to increase capacity, which increases sewage aeration and will reduce odour next spring.

New this year will be the handling of the sludge once it is removed. In the past it was spread fully wet on a farm field.

Now it will drain in a plastic fabric tube known as a geotextile de-watering tube and then be spread next year in a drier format.

Gallant also wants a report on the long-term options for sewage in Stratford.

"We want to have, in four to six months at the most, all the options identified, studied, and cost out to present to the public," said Gallant. "This is looking at what we have to do to handle sewage for the next 25 to 50 years as Stratford grows and develops."

Options could be building a treatment plant, relocating the lagoon system to a bigger, different location or hooking into Charlottetown's system.

"We need to have those decisions made because it's a two to three year process to get everything in place," said Gallant. "We need to make the decision as soon as we can so that we can start going to find the resources to do it."

Water and sewer services enhanced

In November Newfoundland & Labrador invested \$881,000 for water and sewer projects in the towns of Hants Harbour, New Perlican and Bay de Verde.

In Hants Harbour, \$687,000 will fund work to improve the Custard Head sewer and treatment system.

In New Perlican, \$119,000 was committed to upgrade the water storage tanks in the community.

In Bay de Verde, \$75,000 was promised to conduct a study into the viability of a community septic system.

Wastewater plant repairs

In October, Newfoundland & Labrador invested \$32,000 to conduct repairs on the BioGreen Wastewater Plant in Cox's Cove.

The province will provide 90 per cent of the project funds and the Bay of Islands town will cover the remaining 10 per cent.

Improvements to water, wastewater in Pictou County

Important improvements to water and wastewater are coming for Pictou County, Nova Scotia residents.

The federal, provincial and municipal governments announced \$3.09 million in infrastructure investments on Dec. 7.

The funds will cover upgrades to water utilities in the Town of Pictou including: refurbishing the water

tower, replacing the distribution line and other drinking water-related infrastructure.

In Trenton, approximately 565 metres of combined sewers will be separated; phase two of the town's storm sewer separation plan.

The funding will also cover paving Highway 348.

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Pictou water tower emptied for upgrades

■ BY SUEANN MUSICK

THE NEWS

[Pictou, NS] – The water tower in the Town of Pictou (Nova Scotia) will be dry for the next few weeks so the upgrades can take place on the 25-year-old structure.

Pictou town engineer Jim Chisholm said JDCMI started work on the tower this week (Nov. 6) by preparing the structure for sandblasting on both the inside and outside.

"It been getting pretty rusty and there were concerns about the rust causing some erosion," he said. "This way we will know that (it) has to be repaired."

Chisholm said he would like to see the work completed within the next five to six weeks, but that will depend on the weather. If the work can't be finished this winter, the company will need to come back in the spring to complete the job.

The tower, which stands in Victory Heights area of the town, holds about 600,000 gallons of water that is filtered in from the town's wells.

Since the tower can't hold water while the upgrades are taking place, residents are getting their water directly from the well system and a \$40,000 bladder is on site in case extra water is needed. Chisholm said the bladder will be sold by the town once the work is finished.

"The bladder is not really being used right now," he said. "It is a standby supply for us."

He said the wells are being monitored by the public works department and residents have been asked to conserve water during the next few weeks.

"There is a procedure in place to turn wells on and off as the demand requires it," he said.

The town's fire department also has an alternative plan in place that relies on mutual aid from



Pictou town engineer Jim Chisholm monitors the work taking place on the Nova Scotia town's water tower. The work is expected to last at least five weeks and alternative plans are in place to supply residents with water during this time. (Photo: Sueann Musick/The News)

other parts of the county.

Chisholm said the town doesn't anticipate any major problems over water quality while the temporary system is in place, but if residents are experiencing discoloration, they should contact public works.

The work on the water tower is part of the town's

overall upgrades to its water system and is costing the town \$600,000.

"The long term plan is to have a water treatment plant here and to have the tower in good shape to hold the water," he said.

He expects upgrades to the water tower will last another 25 years.

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Island capital urges residents to sign up for metering voluntarily

■ BY ANDY WALKER

While the Prince Edward Island capital still intends to implement a mandatory water metering policy over the next five years, the chair of the Water and Sewer Committee is hoping most people will sign on voluntarily.

"Moving towards a fully metered system is a very important component of our conservation program," said Councillor Edward Rice. "There is still a lot of work to be done on conservation but metering will be a major step forward for the City on this front."

Rice said over 600 customers had signed on to the voluntary program by mid-November. He admitted that is a small percentage of the utility's 7,000-plus customers, but he is encouraged by the uptake. As an incentive, the utility is covering the metering and plumbing costs for everyone who signs up voluntarily.

Charlottetown City council passed a resolution in 2013 requiring all flat rate customers to have meters installed by the end of 2019. While Rice said council remains firmly committed to that date, he is hoping the majority of customers will opt to convert voluntarily before the deadline.

"Already, the utility has received many calls and visits from homeowners interested in becoming metered and they expect to see this trend continue into 2014."

To help lead by example, Rice said the mayor and all 10 City councillors have signed on to the program. Rice said his own experience has shown him "just how much water I was using and I have reduced my consumption significantly."

Mayor Clifford Lee agreed. He said Charlottetown residents continue to be a major driver in the success of the City's conservation efforts. "The number of metering volunteers that we have seen so far and that we anticipate in the next year is a true reflection of the commitment residents have to conservation."

In the interim, the utility has updated metered bills to include information such as the average litres used per day and the average daily cost. It also provides one year's worth of consumption history so customers can compare their usage.

All metered customers were to receive the new bills in December 2013 and January 2014. The utility is hoping the new bills will increase customer awareness about water consumption.

"We are always looking for different ways to provide information to residents and business owners about water use," said Mayor Clifford Lee. "These bills will provide Water and Sewer Utility customers with relevant information that can be used to manage and track their water use."



Clare Digby MLA Gordon Wilson, Warden of the Municipality of the District of Digby Linda Gregory and West Nova MP Greg Kerr checked out the new turbine at the Smith's Cove wastewater treatment facility on Friday, Nov. 18. (Photo: © Jonathan Riley/Digby Courier)

Using wind power to treat sewer

The Municipality of the District of Digby (Nova Scotia) has installed a wind turbine at the Smith's Cove wastewater treatment plant.

The 5-kilowatt turbine will produce enough electricity to take care of approximately one third of the electricity needs of the UV building, where one stage of the sewage treatment takes place.

The turbine will also measure wind speeds and consistency to determine the potential of the site for further wind development opportunities.

The Endurance S343 5kw wind turbine was installed in late August.

The municipality used \$50,000 from the federal gas tax funds to pay for and install the turbine.

Greg Kerr, MP for West Nova, visited the facility with Linda Gregory, warden of the Municipality of the District of Digby, Gordon Wilson, MLA for Clare Digby and Zach Churchill, the provincial minister of Natural Resources on Friday, Nov. 15.

Kerr said he was impressed with the plant facility

and its positive environmental impact.

"Certainly the government of Canada is pleased to be able to contribute to this initiative through the federal gas tax initiative funding formula", Kerr said, "And I'm particularly pleased to note the level of interest and cooperation by all three levels of government in making it possible."

Gregory said that the project was one more step towards the intention of the Digby area to establish itself as one of Atlantic Canada's leading "green" communities.

"We're a rural area at the forefront in support of, and in pursuit of, development of renewable energy initiatives, and we're already witnessing increased global interest in our community, especially from proponents with renewable tidal energy proposals", said Gregory.

The turbine, located at the UV building, will be net metered through a program with Nova Scotia Power, which allows surplus energy to be sent to the utility.

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The staff and management of the MPWWR and the executive of the MPWWA wish to recognize these companies for their ongoing support and participation:

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