



# Maritime Provinces Water & Wastewater REPORT

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

■ BY JERRY VILLARD

Welcome to the fall of 2020! I'm sure it has been a trying summer for many of you, dealing with all the extra protocols required to protect us from COVID-19. As with many of you, this has curbed much of what the MPWWA has been able to offer for training this summer. We have continued to try to get access to virtual training through many different means. Some was and continues to be provided by suppliers and companies that were linked through the MPWWA.

The hope is that everyone can access what you need to improve and help you do your work. Anyone with any requests or suggestions please send to any of your directors, contact information available at mpwwa.ca.

I will keep it short and sweet this issue, since there isn't much to update on. We are working on the 2021 annual Training Seminar, trying to determine if it is feasible or safe to have under current circumstances. Will keep you posted as decisions are made.

Thanks to all the directors, supplier reps, and government reps on the board for the work you have done and continue to do to keep the MPWWA progressing.

Be safe, be kind, and don't let COVID keep you from enjoying life at work and at home, even if it has to happen differently!

## Big things happening with wastewater in Cape Breton Regional Municipality

■ BY RAISSA TETANISH

Two major wastewater projects currently on the go in Cape Breton Regional Municipality (CBRM) will see service to thousands of residents in the next few years.

Matt Viva, manager of wastewater operations for the municipality, is overseeing the projects in Sydney West, Glace Bay, and Port Morien, all of which total more than \$150-million.

"In CBRM, there are eight communities that collect municipal wastewater but lack wastewater treatment, so we've created a roadmap on what future treatment will look like in each community," said Viva, about a preliminary design project he recently finished that will guide current and future capital wastewater projects. "We are a community of coastal communities, spread across thousands of square kilometres of land resulting in many untreated outfalls scattered along our coastline. The preliminary roadmap identifies future pipe corridors, pumping station locations, treatment plant processes and locations, as well as outfall configurations."

When it comes to the Sydney Harbour West Wastewater Collection and Treatment Project, Viva says the \$58-million

project will eliminate the remaining raw discharge outfalls that currently discharge to the Southeast arm of Sydney Harbour. The municipal effluent will be conveyed to a new treatment plant.

"This project will see five kilometres of new collector sewer, a new treatment plant, and new outfall," said Viva, noting it will service roughly 7,000 area residents. "We're also upgrading 11 lift stations, and conducting a thorough inflow and infiltration (I&I) investigation on our existing collection system."

The wastewater manager says the focus is to identify sources of and eliminating extraneous flow, which will guide the detailed design process, aiming for the construction of a smaller treatment plant.

"That's the focus of all our projects."

The municipality's other major project in Glace Bay, Port Morien and surrounding areas – coming in at \$98-million – is broken into three main components. A UV system will be replaced at CBRM's largest wastewater treatment plant in Sydney, while UV systems will replace chlorine disinfection units at four lagoons within the municipality. The largest component of the project involving the two communities – Glace Bay and Port Morien – currently without treatment, will see new collection piping, lift stations, and

We're also upgrading 11 lift stations, and conducting a thorough inflow and infiltration (I&I) investigation on our existing collection system.

MATT VIVA, CBRM WASTEWATER OPERATIONS MANAGER



A new 4.5-kilometre pressure main is being installed as part of the Sydney Harbour West Wastewater Collection and Treatment Project.

Matt Viva photo

treatment plants installed.

When it comes to Glace Bay, 1,400 manholes and 126 kilometres of piping will be studied to identify sources of I&I, eight outfalls will be eliminated, and the project will see the installation of three new lift stations, six combined sewer overflows (CSO's), nearly 3,000 metres of gravity sewer and 2,000 metres of pressure sewer, and one new treatment plant and outfall.

Port Morien will see 1,300 metres of gravity sewer and 1,300 metres of pressure sewer installed, one new lift station and treatment plant. As well, 62 manholes and five kilometres of gravity sewer will be investigated for I&I.

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Publication No. 40064799

# All Nova Scotia schools undergo testing for lead and copper

## ■ ANDY WALKER

Testing for lead and copper levels in drinking water carried out in all schools in Nova Scotia last year showed that 70 per cent of the facilities met the new federal guidelines.

The maximum acceptable concentration for lead has gone from 0.01 milligrams per litre mg/L, set in 1992, to 0.005 mg/L while the new guideline value for copper in drinking water is 2 mg/L. Violet MacLeod, communications officer with the province's Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, said in a written statement, "Following the release of Health Canada's new guidelines, the province acted proactively providing clean, drinkable water to all schools, and committing to test the water and share the results. We have delivered on our commitment and all schools' water testing results have been posted on our website."

A drinking water tap in any of the 370 schools that had levels above the guidelines has been taken out of service and alternate sources of clean drinking water have been provided. MacLeod emphasized

all of the schools have clean drinking water available adding "our school's water sources undergo regular testing. We have been a leader in Canada in supplying clean water to our schools."

She said in the statement the Regional Centres of Education (RCEs) and Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) are taking steps to correct the problems and their plans are being updated quarterly. MacLeod said the final cost has not yet been tabulated.

Since the advent of COVID-19, there has been no access by students or staff to school water fountains. MacLeod noted in the statement touchless water stations are being installed at all schools across Nova Scotia.

"We continue to supply clean drinking water to our schools and bottled water will not be removed from any school until we are certain the drinking water meets Health Canada's standards and that drinking taps are touchless," the statement concluded.

In releasing the guidelines for lead, Health Canada notes lead levels in Canadi-



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ans have fallen dramatically over the past 30 years due to limitations on the metal in refineries, gasoline, paint, and cosmetic products.

Lead was approved for use in plumbing products until 1975, and is found in a number of older buildings. The federal guidelines note "since lead was regularly used in these plumbing system parts for many years, drinking water systems in Canada may still have some of these lead components in place. It is expected to take time before all jurisdictions are able to meet the

new guideline for the maximum concentration of lead in drinking water."

Health Canada notes the guidelines for copper of 2 milligrams per litre (mg/L) protects "the most vulnerable members of society, such as infants and children. It is also protective of both short term and long term exposures."

The results of the province's water tests in public schools can be found online at <https://www.ednet.ns.ca/water-test-results>.

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# Big things happening with wastewater in Cape Breton Regional Municipality

Continued from page 1

The Port Morien portion will see 413 residents serviced, with another 14,500 residents in Glace Bay being served by the new treatment plant there.

Those two communities are identified as high-risk under the national Wastewater System Effluent Regulations that came into force in 2012, which all municipalities in the country are to comply with. Being high-risk, the projects are to be completed by January 2021, however Viva says both Port Morien and Glace Bay won't meet that deadline.

"I anticipate the Port Morien system will be complete near the end of 2023, and Glace Bay will be around 2026," he said.

Sydney West, says Viva, is a medium-risk, required to be completed by 2030. Construction on that plant is set to begin next summer, and it's hoped to be up and running by the end of 2022.

The other five communities in CBRM fall under the low-risk category, with a deadline of 2040, and Viva says planning for those will start possibly around 2028, once Port Morien and Glace Bay are up and running.

The Sydney West project is cost-shared between the municipal, provincial, and federal governments; and Glace Bay/Port Morien is fully paid for by the federal and provincial governments.

When it comes to the companies hired for the work on the projects so far, Viva says the engineering design teams and contractors have all come from the local area.

"CBRM has a strong base of consulting firms in town, as well as reputable contractors, so all of our resources have been from here," he said.

The key to all of this is to build efficient facilities and systems that reduce financial operating pressure for the long haul, which is what they're trying to do.



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# Charlottetown declares universal metering program a success

■ BY ANDY WALKER

The Charlottetown Water and Sewer Utility is declaring the implementation of its universal metering program a success.

Since the program was implemented in 2013, Deputy Mayor Jason Coady said there has been a 13 per cent reduction in water consumption. The deputy mayor, who is responsible for the Water and Sewer Utility around the council table, noted there are still approximately 200 customers who have not yet complied with the requirement to install a meter.

Effective Oct. 1, those customers saw their surcharge increase from \$50 to \$100 per quarter. He noted that rate is almost three times what the average metered customer pays on the consumption portion of their bill.

"The Water and Sewer Utility has done an excellent job in educating residents, as well as offering incentive programs to reduce water consumption," said Mayor Philip Brown. "The metering program puts control into the hands of the residents as they manage their own usage, which in many cases has resulted in decreased

annual consumption."

Although the population of Charlottetown is growing, residents are managing to reduce annual water consumption. The annual consumption in 2008 was 7.2 million cubic meters, compared to an annual usage of 6.2 million cubic meters in 2019.

"We all benefit from water consumption reduction," said the deputy mayor. "Not only is it better for our environment and helps protect this resource, but it also reduces the urgency for the city to invest in additional wellfields, which is a costly venture that translates into higher rates for consumers and can put more strain on local watersheds."

Charlottetown brought a third wellfield on stream last year in the Miltonvale Park area to take pressure off its two older wellfields that draw from the Winter River.



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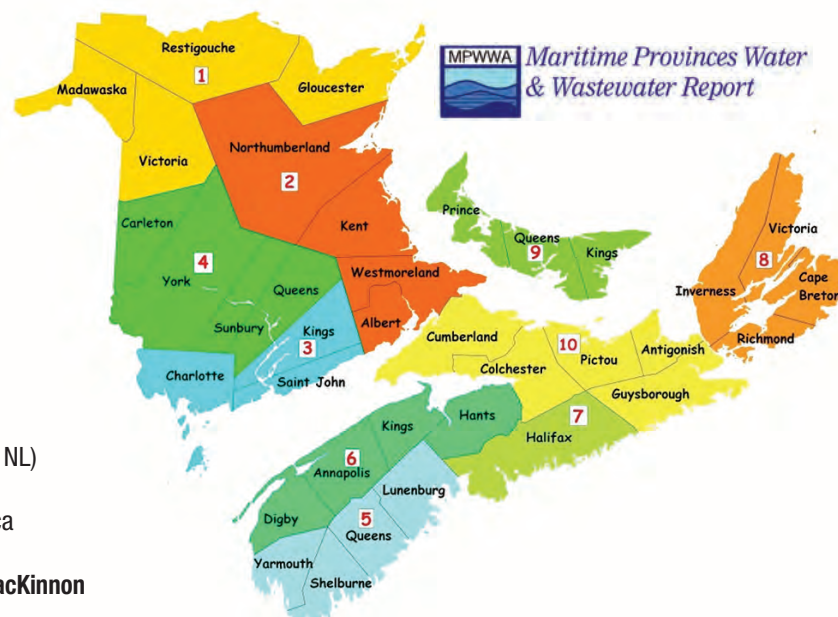
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# Hanhams always on the clock at small utility

■ BY RAISSA TETANISH



Operator name: Michael Hanhams  
Water Treatment/Distribution Operator

**Q. Where do you work?**

A. Municipality of the District of Guysborough.

**Q. How long have you worked in the industry?**

A. 14 years.

**Q. When did you join MPWWA and what are the advantages of being a member?**

A. Approximately 12 years ago; I rely on the training and enjoy the seminars to keep up-to-date on new technology.

**Q. What's the biggest challenge in your job?**

A. My biggest challenge is trying to keep ahead of my workload. As a small utility, there are issues that surface constantly, then things have to become prioritized.

**Q. What is your favourite part of the job?**

A. Operating the utility at my discretion with the support and help of my employer.

**Q. What is your least favourite part of the job?**

A. I stress way too much over things I can't control.

**Q. How did you first become involved in the industry?**

A. I was working in public works at the time the water plant was being constructed and was encouraged to move up.

**Q. What's the least understood part of your job? What else should the public know about what you do?**

A. What it actually takes to get safe, potable water to a consumer's tap. In a small utility, the clock doesn't always stop at 5 p.m. When an alarm comes in at 2 a.m.,

someone has to respond and in a small utility it's usually the same person.

**Q. What's something everyone knows about you?**

A. That I will go to any extreme to resolve an issue.

**Q. What's something almost no one knows about you?**

A. How personally I take criticism towards issues that are out of my control.

**Q. What is your proudest professional accomplishment?**

A. Being trusted by senior staff and council to operate this facility at my discretion.

**Q. What is your proudest personal accomplishment?**

A. My family.

**Q. What's your best advice to a fellow industry member, or someone looking to join the industry?**

A. With my experience operating a small utility of 450 customers, working solo is not uncommon. There are going to be times when you feel quite alone, especially at 2 a.m. in a break down. Don't be too proud to ask questions; there's no such thing as a stupid one. Make friends in the industry, call on them if you need advice or help, and also offer yourself to help others. It is a very rewarding career path most of the time, but with any career it has its ups and downs.



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# Straight Pipe Replacement Program on track for Municipality of the District of Lunenburg

## ■ GAYLE WILSON

The Municipality of the District of Lunenburg's (MODL) Straight Pipe Replacement Program is on track for another successful year, according to project coordinator Maria Butts.

In an update at MODL's Policy and Strategy Committee meeting in September, Butts reported that 195 approved septic systems have been installed around the river in the first three years of the program — 77 in 2018, 73 in 2019, and 45 systems installed so far this season, which started in June.

"So we have made really great progress this year. I don't have any concerns at this stage about being able to meet our target of between 70 and 80 sites this season," said Butts.

In 2017, MODL signed an agreement with the Nova Scotia and federal governments to orchestrate and jointly fund the program, which is designed to alleviate the problem of straight pipes carrying raw sewage from residences into the LaHave River.

The municipality developed a Wastewater Management District, and all properties within the district are required to demonstrate the existence of approved systems.

In all, there are 1,735 properties in the program area. Of those, 1,127 systems were confirmed by way of record received, through MODL's own search efforts, or by property inspections. MODL has confirmed there are more than 300 properties within the Wastewater Management District that are eligible for the program.

Of the 300 eligible properties, owners of 248 of them have signed agreements allowing the municipality to begin undertaking work on their properties on behalf of the program, according to Butts.

At that figure, she's confident the municipality will be able to recover its costs in administering the program.

To date, 244 design assessments had been completed and of those have completed 239 designs that are approved by the property owners and gone on to the Department of Environment for installation approval.

"We certainly are crossing our fingers for some favourable fall weather, but all things considered we're in a very good position," said Butts.

A remaining 173 properties still require an inspection for the municipality to determine whether they qualify under the program.

"That number has come down a lot

where we started. A year-and-a-half ago, we were at over 850 properties requiring inspections to be made. A lot of progress being made over the last just about two years getting that number where it is today," said Butts.

The target this year is 400 inspections, with 316 having been completed to date, and 364 last season.

Of the total 1735 properties, there are 50 property owners from whom MODL has had no communication.

Butts said staff are now looking to contact those 50, "so we can look towards finalizing our final target for installations as we come into the last half of our program."



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# Moncton City council amends water supply bylaw

## ■ ANDY WALKER

The City of Moncton has amended its bylaw on Development, Maintenance and Supply of Water to give the city manager authority to impose water consumption restrictions.

The change is designed to allow the city to react quickly in the event there is a serious risk to the water supply in the Hub City. Bruce Tait, the city's general manager of operations, explained in a news release the bylaw previously required a council

resolution to declare a water shortage and impose restrictions on use. The general manager said the amendment allows for more flexibility to new or unknown issues, such as the risk of a toxic blue-green algae bloom in one of the reservoirs.

Blue-green algae are naturally occurring microscopic organisms found in both fresh and salt water. Under conditions such as warm water temperatures, high nutrient loads, and other influences, blue-green algae can multiply quickly and create blooms. These blooms can sometimes

produce harmful toxins. Blooms can occur at any time of year, but are more common in summer or early fall.

On Aug. 12, the city issued a request to all customers to voluntarily reduce their water consumption to necessary activities only. Tait said the aim was to preserve more water in the reservoir, therefore keeping the water deeper and cooler, and will help in keeping the nutrients,

algae, and any toxins they produce as diluted as possible.

By Aug. 23, overall consumption had dropped by approximately 21 per cent, or

approximately 12 million litres per day. Like many parts of the Maritimes, Moncton experienced a dry summer that impacted on reservoir levels.

The Turtle Creek reservoir has been the tri-community's primary drinking water supply since 1962, and has a capacity of about 7 billion litres. The Tower Road reservoir, opened in 2014, supplies the Turtle Creek reservoir and provides an additional 10 billion litres of drinking water supply to the communities of Moncton, Dieppe, and Riverview.

## Tender awarded for next wellfield project phase

The Town of Cornwall has awarded the tender for the second phase of its wellfield project.


Island Coastal Services Inc. was the lone bidder when tenders closed and council decided to award the contract for \$1,534,226.50. The same company also completed the access road and laying the transmission pipe during the first phase of the project at a cost of a little over \$1 million.

The wellfield, which will double the water supply for the town of approximately 4,000, is being built on 11 hectares near the community's western boundary. Work got underway in late August and is expected to

take approximately a year.

Councillor Elaine Barnes, who chairs the Water and Sewer Committee, told a recent council meeting the community has experienced "unprecedented growth over the past several years." She added the additional wellfield is required to ensure "a clean and safe potable water supply is available for the town for the long term and to enable future growth."

Cornwall is receiving federal and provincial funding under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program to help with the cost of the project.



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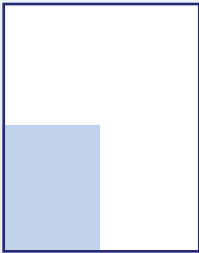


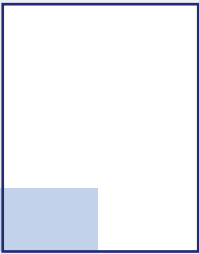

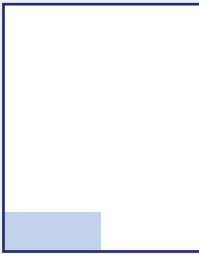
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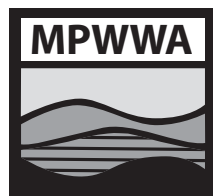
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# Maritime Provinces Water & Wastewater REPORT

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