



Maritime Provinces Water & Wastewater REPORT

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MESSAGE FROM THE VICE-CHAIR

■ BY TROY ATKINSON

Welcome to the fall of 2022!

Happy Thanksgiving, happy Halloween. The fall time is certainly a beautiful time of year and also a time of year where our operators are extremely busy with flushing programs, maintenance repairs, water and wastewater sampling, etc. I just wanted to acknowledge you all and let you know the MPWWA is always here with any questions that you may have regarding training, contacts, job opportunities; please feel to reach out to any of our zone reps. I also encourage the operators to check out our FORUM on our website.

I had the privilege to attend the ACWWA in Saint John a few weeks ago and the turnout was nothing short of fantastic. It was nice to see everyone finally getting back to networking and seeing all the latest technology offered by our local vendors. The really good part about attending this conference was a lot of operators asking when the next MPWWA was happening and I assured them it was coming in April 2023 in P.E.I. Stay tuned for dates.

Following the warm dry summer, we were hit with the devastating blow to our Maritimes through Hurricane Fiona, which destroyed many housing and land infrastructure not to mention both our water and wastewater systems. Again I want emphasize the importance of a competent, trained, knowledgeable operator to help their communities get through these hard times.

In closing, I want everyone to be safe, be kind and enjoy life to the fullest, whether it's at work or with family.

Stellarton water holds up through testing program

■ BY STEVE GOODWIN

Stellarton's water treatment systems supervisor says he hopes a more robust means of testing the town's water quality can help the town detect its drinking water contents.

Andy Hartery says spring and summer testing showed the water is of high quality and relatively free from materials that could have affected it. However, he hopes next year's testing will provide more information to examine.

"We kept testing, but we didn't get what we did last year," he said. "We're trying to put in a system to get more comprehensive results."

Town engineer Blaine Murray followed up on the testing and measures sought this year to reduce the presence of two compounds in its water: 2-Methylisoborneol (MIB) and Geosmin.

"The two compounds come every season," he said. "That's what we look for, but we got very little, not enough to do any analysis and get any kind of measure."

What was detected was clearer drinking water free from issues residents would complain about during the summer, he said. The testing began in May.

"It did have a lot of benefits, such as colour removal and organic removal," he said. "It removed a lot of organics and improved water quality. We finished testing in late August. Usually we'd start in mid-June and it goes for four to six weeks."

The water treatment method called powdered activated carbon (PAC) was used this year.

"(The water) improved with carbon



Andy Hartery stands beside the dam along the East River that helps supply treated drinking water to Stellarton.

(Goodwin photo)

treatment," he said. "The carbon addition started and finished at the same time, so we're looking to start at the same time next year in the first of May and end in September."

Murray said the community has shared its thoughts regarding improved water quality.

"We're getting a lot of good comments from people saying the water quality is better," he said.

Both Murray and Hartery shared information on the impact of post-tropical storm Fiona on the town and its water system.

Hartery noted that the treatment plant has several generators, including a large one outside. He said the town's reservoir was filled prior to the storm. He said there was little storm damage and the river water remained clear.

"We never lost our landline or internet," he said. "We were down here quite a bit to check things."

A dam spans the width of the East River to produce water levels high enough for remain above the level of the intake pipe into the plant.

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ADDRESS LABEL HERE

Publication No. 40064799

MEMBER PROFILE: Using math and science on the daily a plus for Tye

Operator name: Colin Tye
Operator title/position: Water/Wastewater Operator

Q. Where do you work?

A. West Hants Regional Municipality.

Q. How long have you worked in the industry?

A. Almost a year and a half.

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

A. 2021. Having access to the training courses is a big plus. Always something new to learn in this industry.

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

A. I would have to say finding and learning my chemical balances for each plant. I operate three different water plants and two wastewater plants on two-week rotations.

For water we have DAF, membrane and conventional, and each water source is very different from the others, both quality and alkalinity wise, and how it behaves in the process to the chemical dosages, temperature changes, etc. What you do chemically at one plant doesn't necessarily work the same way at another.

Q. What is your favourite part of the job?

A. The rotation of plants and getting to learn all the different process types of water treatment in particular. I have always

enjoyed math and chemistry so it's nice to be doing that daily and getting some mental stimulation on the regular throughout the day.

Being very close to home and not travelling for work is also up there as a favourite part.

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

A. I can't really say I have a least favourite part of the job. It's all been great. If anything, maybe hearing the phone ring and SCADA alarm at 2 a.m.

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

A. I was briefly on the Public Works road crew for our township, and a position opened up on the utility side and I jumped all over it. I was fortunate enough to meet the criteria and be hired.

Q. What's the least understood part of your job?

A. Definitely would be how much goes in to treating water, both process and responsibility wise. A lot goes on in the background of communities and cities that is usually unnoticed. Citizens are so used to having water immediately when they turn a tap, but it takes a lot to get it there.

Q. What else should the public know about what you do?

A. Again, that there is a lot that goes in to treating water and wastewater both financially and process wise, and to never



Colin Tye stands by one of the skids in the membrane filtration plant in the West Hants Regional Municipality.

(Submitted photo)



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take it for granted that we can turn a tap and have clean drinking water or be able to treat and dispose of our biohazards and not have it in our lakes or ecosystems that surround us. Not everywhere in the world is that fortunate.

Q. What's something everyone knows about you?

A. That I am an avid guitar player/musician. I've been fortunate enough to travel and play a lot of places throughout our country.

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

A. That I build guitars in my spare time.

Q. What is your proudest professional accomplishment?

A. I would dare say I'm proud of most of the things I set out to do whether it's getting a new certification or being determined to learn a new skill, and excel at it.

I enjoy new challenges, and anytime I can place a check mark beside something, and truly understand it, not just get by, it's usually a good feeling.

Q. What is your proudest personal accomplishment?

A. Definitely would have to be sharing the stage with some of the biggest bands in Canada such as Big Wreck, One Bad Son, the Trews and Big Sugar.

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

A. I think asking questions should never be below you. You only stand to gain something by asking questions, whether it be a small or big gain. If you don't know the answer to something, go out of your way to find it. I find the world is filled with too many 'I don't know's'.



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Survey shows condition of country's water infrastructure

■ BY ANDY WALKER

A recent Statistics Canada survey showed there were 4,126 wastewater treatment plants and lagoon systems across the country in 2020.

The survey also indicated there were 3,342 water treatment facilities, 472,488 kilometres of underground pipes, and 284,827 kilometres of culverts and open ditches, as well as numerous pump stations, storage facilities, and other assets.

Canada's Core Public Infrastructure Survey measures the stock, condition and performance of assets owned by Canadian governments. According to the Survey of Drinking Water Plants, at least 86 per cent of Canadians were served by drinking water plants that are licensed and regulated by provincial/territorial agencies (excluding First Nations communities) in 2019.

Municipalities are responsible for the vast majority of public water utilities as they accounted for more than 96 per cent of the organizations who reported water infrastructure in 2020. These assets require a significant amount of capital investments. According to the Annual Capital and Repair Expenditures Survey, 28 per cent of total capital spending on infrastructure by municipal, local and regional governments in 2020 was on water and sewer infrastructure.

The survey showed the pace of construction continues to increase with an average of 10,069 kilometres of underground pipe installed per year in 2019 and 2020, compared with around 6,844 kilometres per year from 2000 to 2018. While capital expenditures and the pace of construction of water infrastructure accelerated in recent years, these investments have not kept up with the deterioration of existing assets as the remaining useful life of water and sewage infrastructure assets declined from 2017 to 2021.

A significant portion of linear water infrastructure was over 50 years old in 2020. In fact, close to one in five kilometres of water, sewer and stormwater pipes (86,533 kilometres out of 472,488) was reaching the end of its useful life, having been built prior to 1970. The average expected useful life of new underground pipes installed in 2020 ranged from 50 to 73 years.



Stormwater management facilities such as ponds, wetlands and infiltration basins had the largest share (43 per cent) of total inventory built since 2010. Over one-quarter of the inventory of wastewater non-linear assets except lagoon systems (storage tanks, pump stations, lift stations and treatment plants), drinking water pump stations and water treatment facilities were constructed in the period from 2010 to 2020.

Unlike most public infrastructure, water, sewer and stormwater pipes are hidden underground, making it challenging to assess conditions. In 2020, the condition of

12 per cent of the length of pipes was unknown, compared with 18 per cent in 2018. Almost three out of five kilometres were rated in good or very good condition in 2020, up from slightly more than half in 2018.

In 2020, there was an almost 10 per cent increase over 2018 in the share of organizations that owned water infrastructure and had an asset management plan. At least four out of five urban municipalities with 30,000 or more residents had an asset management plan for their water infrastructure in 2020, compared with just over two-thirds in 2018.

New Glasgow, Trenton receive funds for water-related projects



New Glasgow Mayor Nancy Dicks

■ BY STEVE GOODWIN

Two Pictou County towns are receiving provincial funds for water projects.

The town of New Glasgow has been awarded \$89,946 for its source of drinking water at Forbes Lake.

Trenton is receiving \$62,572 to go toward the first phase of its reservoir project that has been tendered for water line replacement on Duke Street.

"We applied in May for the funds," said Alanna MacDonald, Trenton's chief administrative officer. "It will go a long way toward improving the town's water distribu-

tion system."

The project involves replacing the main water line on Duke Street. Work also includes a water servicer lateral, replacing two fire hydrants and repaving.

"It replaces aging distribution main lines that are nearing the end of life span" she said.

The towns are among a number of municipalities receiving funds totaling \$1,206,247 this year through the Provincial Capital Assistance Program, which allows the province to contribute funds to priority municipal infrastructure projects.

New Glasgow's funding is for its west side

berm rehabilitation project at Forbes Lake.

"We're really pleased to receive these funds," Mayor Nancy Dicks said. "It will be very helpful for the water utility. It's a priority in all the decisions the town makes because we consider our water our no. 1 asset."

She said work follows a watershed study and includes dealing with trees that compromise the berm's effectiveness.

Dicks said she is not sure when work on the berm can start, pending approval by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans due to fish species in the lake. She said the project has received environmental approval.



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Woodstock studying changing water billing system from meter to flat rate

■ **BY JIM DUMVILLE**
LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

Woodstock residents may soon experience significant changes in how they pay for town water.

During a regular council session this summer, Geraldine Campbell, an accounts receivable administrative staff member, delivered a presentation overviewing the benefits of the town replacing its current metering system with a levy flat rate system for residential customers. Most businesses, with some exceptions, would remain on a metered system.

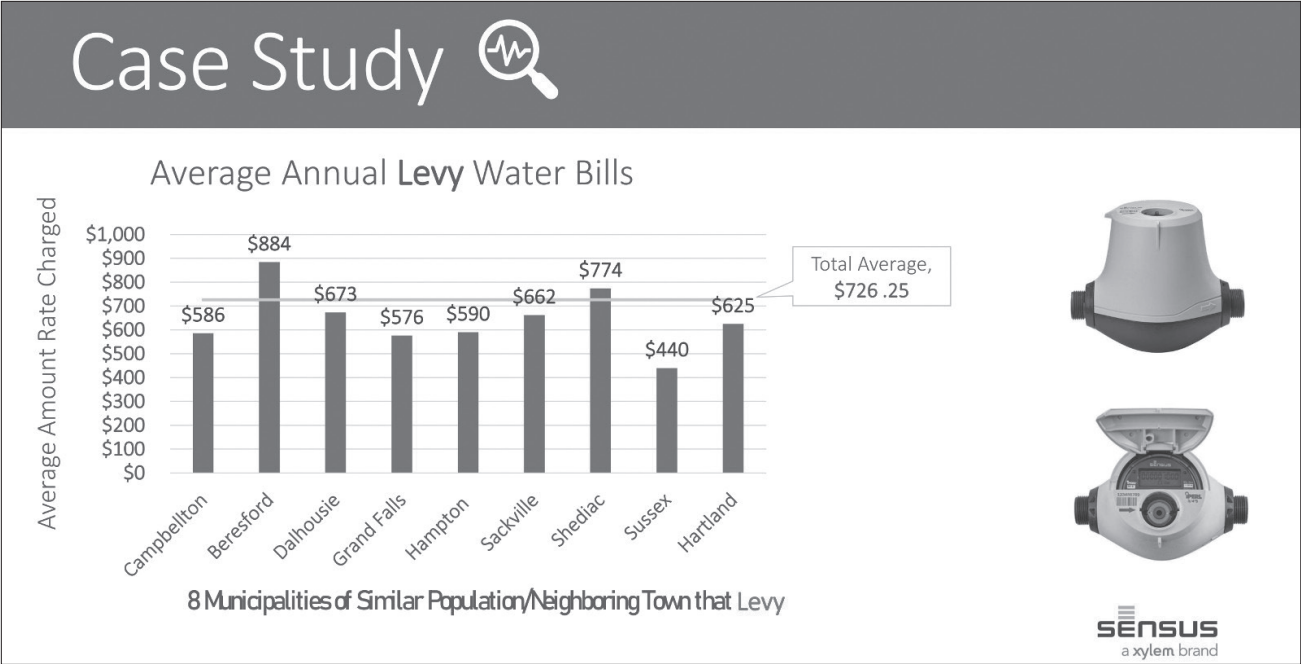
The PowerPoint presentation is available on the town of Woodstock website.

Campbell's presentation follows a recent efficiency overview of the town's water and sewer billing structure. Improved staffing efficiency, significant cost savings and a more streamlined billing system for residents highlight the benefits of the levy system.

Following the meeting, Woodstock chief administrative officer Andrew Garnett explained some residents would pay more and some less, depending on water usage. He added the final numbers are not available, but the study will deliver significant savings and vastly improved efficiency over the long term.

During her presentation to council, Campbell explained that under the current metering system, the town would spend more than \$400,000 in meters, admail, wages and lost time over the next three to five years. She explained that it currently takes three employees an average of six weeks to complete the metered semi-annual billing process.

Campbell said water and sewer customers deliver the meter readings in various ways, including by phone, email or drop or mail the numbers to the town hall. Staff then face the long process of compiling those numbers on



A recent presentation to Woodstock town council proposing a switch from water meters to a levy system included a chart comparing costs of neighbouring communities on a levy system.

an Excel program before sending out individual bills.

Campbell added meters cost approximately \$300 each, and an estimated 1,300 would require replacement in the next three to five years. She added admail, postage and paper cost \$7,000 per year.

Campbell also outlined benefits to residents, including “no surprises” on the annual water bill. She added residents could pay in full within 30 days for an incentive discount, pay quarterly, or set up equalized monthly payments.

Campbell said the town could direct savings to water and sewer upgrades.

She said the town set a goal to convince 80 per cent of customers to sign up for e-services, with the assistance of town staff, to improve savings and efficiency further.

Campbell, Finance Director Kristen Pelkey and other staff will iron out details for the system and present them to council for a decision in the near future.

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Wastewater upgrades announced for Moncton

■ BY ANDY WALKER

With funding help from the federal and provincial governments, the City of Moncton will be installing sewer separation on three streets in the downtown core.

Lutz, Westmorland and Robinson streets will all be fully reconstructed following the upgrades, and the existing communication and electricity lines will be relocated underground to improve reliability during ice storms. This project will beautify Moncton's downtown, improve the city's capacity to manage wastewater and stormwater, and increase residents' access to potable water.

The project was announced recently, along with improvements to the ventilation system at Forest Glen School. Ottawa is contributing \$9.2 million combined for

both projects, while the Government of New Brunswick is contributing over \$7.2 million, and the City of Moncton is providing more than \$5.6 million.

"Investments in infrastructure are investments in strong and sustainable communities," said Ginette Petitpas-Taylor, Minister of Official Languages and Minister responsible for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, and Member of Parliament for Moncton—Riverview—Dieppe, on behalf of the Hon. Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities. "The upgrades to downtown Moncton wastewater systems and improvements to the ventilation system at Forest Glen School support a healthier community. These projects are important to helping local economies grow and communities thrive."

Greg Turner, the MLA for Moncton South, said the hub

city is experiencing unprecedented growth and "These upgrades will ensure we have reliable water and wastewater infrastructure that will support this growth and at the same time, mitigate the risks associated with climate change." He announced the provincial funding on behalf of Gary Crossman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Minister responsible for the Regional Development Corporation.

Deputy Mayor Bryan Butler added the city has been working diligently to plan for continued growth within the downtown core and "Having the proper infrastructure in place will allow us to push forward and further densify this part of the city. We thank both the federal and provincial governments for their continued support on projects that may not always be highly visible, but which play a crucial role in our city's future."

Funding for improved water and stormwater infrastructure in Kedgwick

Close to \$3.9 million was announced recently to improve drinking water reliability and stormwater management in Kedgwick.

"This investment in improved water and stormwater infrastructure is good for the community and good for the environment," said Environment and Climate Change Minister Gary Crossman, who is

also minister responsible for the Regional Development Corporation. "Communities across the province are thinking long-term about what they need to do to be more sustainable, and we are pleased to partner with them in their efforts."

Funding will be used to replace water and sewer pipes on Notre-Dame Street between des Montagnes and Saint-Jean-

Baptiste streets, and to install a new storm sewer line to separate sanitary and storm sewer collection services. The project is intended to eliminate boil water advisories caused by emergency work and reduce the overflow of stormwater into the sanitary system.

The affected section of the street will also be rebuilt with new curbs and side-

walks once the work is finished.

"Water and sewer infrastructure is key to keeping our communities and our environment healthy," said Madawaska-Restigouche MP René Arseneault. "Today's investment will make services more efficient and reliable, in addition to improving the quality of life of Kedgwick residents. We will keep working collaboratively with our partners to invest in critical infrastructure projects across the country."

The provincial government is contributing more than \$1.3 million to project while the federal government is spending more than \$1.5 million. The Rural Community of Kedgwick is providing more than \$1 million.



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Edmundston to separate wastewater and storm sewer systems

■ BY ANDY WALKER

Thanks to funding from the three levels of government, Edmundston is embarking on a project to separate the combined sanitary and storm sewer system with separate systems on several streets in the eastern part of the city.

As part of the work, water mains will also be installed at multiple locations. The project will increase the city’s capacity to manage wastewater and storm water, and increase access to potable water for residents.

The project was part of a recent funding announcement that also included the installation of solar panels on the roof of the Jean-Daigle Centre, in the area surrounding the amphitheatre, and on the Energy Edmundston building and surrounding land, in addition to building an energy storage system. This is the community’s first solar energy project.

“Investments in infrastructure are investments in strong and sustainable communities,” said René Arseneault, MP for Madawaska—Restigouche, on behalf of the Hon. Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities.

He said the sewer separation and the solar project will support a clean and sustainable future for residents.

“These projects aim to reduce the municipality’s environmental impacts, increase our renewable energy production and improve our water and sewage system, which is in line with the City of Edmundston’s Green Plan objectives as well as our Sustainable Development plan,” explained Mayor Eric Marquis. “The City of Edmundston, Edmundston Energy and the Public Works Department are proud and motivated to undertake these projects in the near future.”

Meanwhile, Environment and Climate Change Minister Gary Crossman added “The installation of solar panels on Centre Jean-Daigle is an innovative way for the city to provide power to the centre. This project, combined with upgrades to the city’s water and wastewater management capacity, demonstrates how

they are planning for the future and our government is pleased to support these important projects.”

The Government of Canada is spending more than \$5.4 million in the projects, while the province is contributing more than \$4.5 million and the City of Edmundston is providing over \$3.6 million.

Campbellton to see improved water and wastewater infrastructure

More than \$1.8 million in funding from all three levels of government has been announced for upgrades to water and wastewater infrastructure in Campbellton.

The upgrades will be along Adam and Dufferin streets in the New Brunswick city.

“Maintaining this important infrastructure benefits residents and helps build a vibrant and sustainable community,” Environment and Climate Change Minister Gary Crossman, who is also minister responsible for the Regional Development Corporation said in a press release.

Through the upgrades, more than 300 metres of again water mains will be replace, as will 120 metres of sanitary sewer pipes. The funding will also be used to construct 370 metres of new storm sewer. Affected roadways, curbs and sidewalks will also be rebuilt once the work is completed.

“Investments in water and wastewater infrastruc-

ture projects are crucial to keeping our communities and our environment healthy,” said Madawaska-Restigouche MP René Arseneault. “Our joint investment with New Brunswick and Campbellton will ensure residents have access to more reliable and efficient wastewater infrastructure and improved access to clean water for years to come.”

The provincial government is contributing \$613,728 for this project while the federal government is providing \$736,547 and the City of Campbellton is contributing \$491,093.

“This project certainly provides a great commitment from these governments in providing our community with the guarantee of safe drinking water and the proper treatment of wastewater,” said Campbellton Mayor Ian Comeau. “This funding is another key example of what we can accomplish for our communities when all levels of government work together.”

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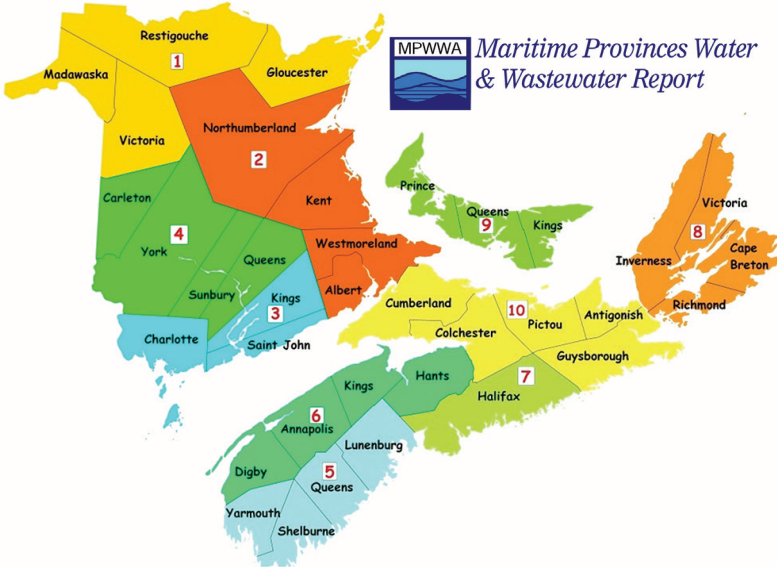
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Seminar Coordinator, Vacant

Long-term plan in works for St. Mary's water treatment plant

■ BY ALEC BRUCE

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

In the wake of recent disruptions at Sherbrooke's water treatment plant, plans are afoot to make the service more modern and reliable, staff told council for the Municipality of the District of St. Mary's at the regular monthly meeting on Sept. 12.

"There's going to be a lot more focus on our (water utility) asset management and what that looks like," said chief administrative officer Marissa Jordan, following her scheduled report to council. "(We're) getting some more details and reports on how to make that treatment facility more efficient, as well as to maintain our assets moving forward so we don't have everything exhausted at once."

District 1 Coun. Courtney Mailman raised the issue following complaints from her constituents.

"We've had some difficulty lately with it and some feedback from residents," she said. "Do we have any planning for maybe installing some sensors to know where things are going wrong and maybe some upgrading as budgeting allows?"

Jordan said the problem is related to aging infrastructure, particularly the pipes that run to residents' homes, some of which haven't been replaced in years.

"We have had a lot of bad luck in the last little while with breaks," she acknowledged. "Unfortunately, we've had a few kind of piled up on top of one another, which has caused some issues in the last couple of weeks. Public works staff have been working really hard to get that managed ... That's something we are working on with the



director of public works."

In June, council approved \$5,730 to replace both failed recycle pumps, which are used in the efficient pre-treatment of raw water prior to sand filtration, at the treatment facility.

"Right now, (neither) are operational ... They need to be replaced as soon as possible," Jordan told a special council meeting at the time.

Council agreed to hire Ed's Plumbing and Heating Ltd.

of Antigonish to replace both pumps, with the expense to be allotted from the municipality's 2022-23 gas tax reserve fund. Earlier this year, council approved \$221,000 in spending from its capital reserve fund on a slate of other projects designed to position the area for economic development and growth, including lighting upgrades to the Recplex in Sherbrooke, and an electric vehicle charging station in Port Bickerton.

Guysborough Journal



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Trenton's water rate faces sharp increase

■ BY STEVE GOODWIN

Residents of Trenton could see a steep hike in their water rates. The town has applied to the province's Utility and Review Board (UARB) on behalf of its water utility for approval to raise the rates.

The proposed prices were outlined in a copy of the notice of a public hearing the UARB is hosting Dec. 14 starting at 10:30 a.m. at the Trenton Annex. An evening provision has also been arranged for 6 p.m. Town chief administrative officer Alanna MacDonald said it's possible the evening portion will be cancelled if no one notifies the board wishing to speak at the hearing.

Residential customers with 5/8" meters would see the current average quarterly water bill rise from \$64.20 currently to \$141.60 in 2023-24, \$165.47 in 2024-25 and \$199.40 in 2025-26.

Unmetered customers also face increases. The current average quarterly water bill based on quarterly consumption of 272 cubic meters is \$99.42. That rate would rise to \$213.41 in 2023-24, \$252.04 in 2024-25 and \$306.39 in 2025-26.

Wholesale rates and the charge for fire protection would also rise sharply.

Residents who attended council's regular meeting in September questioned the sharp increases.



Residents in Trenton could soon see their water rates increase after the town applied to do so through the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board.

(Unsplash photo)

The residents were told that New Glasgow does not have the capacity to supply water to Trenton.

They were also told that the steep rate increases are required due to years without raising the rates. The result has been

“Based on that study, we have no other choice than to raise the rates.”
- ALANNA MACDONALD, TRENTON CAO

revenue shortfalls that have had to be covered by money from elsewhere.

MacDonald said the town's last water utility study took place in 2009 and its last rate increase was in 2011. The most recent study concluded what rates the town required to operate the utility and improve current and future infrastructure.

“Based on that study, we have no other choice than to raise the rates,” she said.

The utility reported an actual deficit of \$128,054 in 2021-22 and projected a \$214,570 deficit in 2022-23.

The budget was up in some areas and down in others, but the biggest budget increase was in depreciation.

Those wishing to respond may speak at the hearing but must notify the board by Dec. 7. Written comments are also due by Dec. 7 by letter, email or fax.

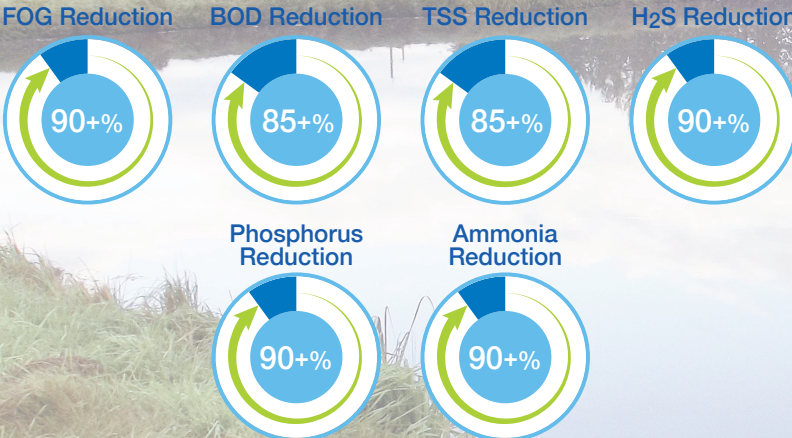
The deadline to apply for standing as an intervener to present evidence or cross-examine witnesses was Sept. 19.



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The water treatment plant in the Town of Lunenburg.

Four civic governments in Lunenburg County receive grants

■ BY KEITH CORCORAN

The province recently awarded financial aid to Lunenburg, along with Bridgewater, the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg (MODL) and Municipality of Chester (MOC) toward major below-street servicing projects.

Lunenburg received \$140,000 from Nova Scotia's Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing to conduct sewer line rehabilitation work along its well-travelled waterfront street, Bluenose Drive.

The town's mayor, Matt Risser, anticipated the work would finish before Oct. 1.

The job involves installation of "a cured-in-place concrete pipe liner from the Rum Row manhole to the lift station," Risser said in an email.

"These infrastructure upgrades will help alleviate overall seawater intrusion and loading on the wastewater treatment plant. The project is expected to cost \$373,300 overall and the contribution from the province will help reduce the amount of borrowing and therefore the debt the

town must carry to complete the project."

Risser said such financial support "is always appreciated as the town strives to maximize impact within the constraints of its capital budgeting capacity."

Meanwhile, Bridgewater secured the same amount from the province and the funds will be spent on wastewater and stormwater replacements along High Street, on the west side of town, and between the Empire Street and Victoria Road intersection.

"The project will see the old system replaced by a modern system that separates out stormwater from sanitary sewer water, diverting rainwater out of our treatment process," town spokesman Patrick Hirtle said in an email. "At the conclusion of the underground work, the street surface will see new sidewalks, curb and gutter, roadbed and pavement installed."

Hirtle expects the procurement for the work will go out later this year with the job starting in the spring of 2023. The project's total budget is \$940,000.

"Much of our community is still served by older com-

bined storm and sanitary sewer systems," Hirtle said.

"When we have major rainfalls, these older systems can get overwhelmed by the volume of water entering the system and this can lead to untreated sewage discharging into the river. Rainwater does not need to be treated, so by diverting out of the treatment process it reduces the burden on our wastewater treatment system, increasing its capacity and extending the life of treatment equipment."

Hirtle said work such as this takes time to finish and Bridgewater has a long-term plan to eliminate the older combined systems in favour of new systems that separate stormwater from sewage.

The MOC received \$28,680 toward its Otter Point wastewater system renewal project, while MODL received \$67,500 from the capital assistance program for a wastewater treatment plant equipment refresh.

The province recently announced 15 communities received financial support via the application-based program to help cover the cost of upgrading water, wastewater, stormwater and solid waste projects.



Andy Hartery stands beside bags of carbon powder used for water testing.

(Goodwin photo)

Stellarton water holds up through testing program

Continued from page 1

Murray said clearing catch basins and covers will follow the general post-storm power restoration and cleanup.

Mayor Danny MacGillivray said he's pleased with the water quality results and the fact that its use was not limited this summer.

"It has been a good year for water," he said. "Mother Nature has been good to us. The water is extremely low but not as low as other years. We didn't have to put in any restrictions. We were close to imposing them this year, and then it rained at different times. We didn't have any smell in the water in the summer time, the first time in my memory."

He cautioned what the town may need to do if the river can no longer be its water source.

"Going forward, I feel we are in a good position with what we have put in place," he said. "The long-term issue is if we have to look for another water source because it is a fragile water system."

Concerns about water quality have persisted over the years, including discussions about 10 years ago that resulted in the formation of a water advisory committee.

Stellarton resident Ron Marks, whose profession is as a chemical engineer, is a member of the committee and

asked pointed questions at the time about town water and how it is being treated and monitored.

He said he is currently encouraged with the water quality and testing.

"From Stellarton's standpoint, it seems to be pretty good quality," he said. "I have no complaints, but I haven't seen any reports. I'd be interested to see what they found."

MacGillivray said council has received no formal report regarding summer testing this year but is given monthly updates at council meetings.

Murray's report to council's regular meeting on Oct. 11 included weekly bacteria sampling, nominally higher water consumption last September than September 2021, and the top up of reservoir levels. He also reported at the plant during the 3.5 days it ran off the generator.

"The turbidity in the raw water was handled by increasing PAC and polymer to help the clarifier," he stated in the report.

Marks views the appointment of full-time staff at the water treatment plant as the most critical action to insure safe drinking water.

"In my opinion, we have full-time people looking after the water treatment plant," he said. "They are able to detect changes in the raw water before problems arise."

Study of Arichat sewage system to guide future improvements

■ BY JAKE BOUDROT

Provincial funding to study a piece of aging infrastructure in Richmond County will determine what work will take place in coming years.

The provincial government confirmed this summer the Municipality of the County of Richmond will receive \$40,491 from the Provincial Capital Assistance Program (PCAP) for an inflow and infiltration study of the Arichat sewage system.

Richmond County’s director of Public Works, Chris Boudreau, explained that the Arichat sewage system sometimes experiences very high flows that may exceed the design capacity of the treatment infrastructure, which is approaching 50 years of age.

“When that happens, it reduces the useful life of the system, it negatively impacts treated effluent quality, and the capacity of the sewer system,” noted Warden Amanda Mombourquette. “The study will identify the minor repairs, the major repairs and will provide a suggested implementation plan.”

While they have marginally increased over the years due to new customer connections, Boudreau said the higher flows are more the result of extraneous flow from inflow and infiltration.

“We’re not looking at average annual flows overall, we’re looking at instantaneous higher flows, so that’s what the



Municipality of the County of Richmond
Warden Amanda Mombourquette

study is going to look for. That essentially means that there’s water getting into the system that is not coming from a sewer pipe,” he said. “The reason you want to get rid of that water is because when that water gets in, it’s not sewage but you’re still pumping like it’s sewage and you’re still putting it through the treatment plant like it’s sewage. You’re treating it, so there’s

costs associated with that. Your pipes are only sized for so much flow, your plant is only designed for so much flow, so with all that extraneous flow, it’s causing other issues so we want to get it out of the system and the study will identify where it’s coming from.”

According to Boudreau, inflow refers to the water discharged to a sanitary sewer system, including service connections, from sources such as roof leaders, cellar, yard or area drains, foundation drains, drainage from springs and swampy areas, manhole covers, interconnections from storm sewers, combined sewers and catch basins, storm waters, surface runoff, street wash waters, and drainage.

As far as infiltration, Boudreau said that pertains to water entering a sewer system, including building sewers, from the ground through defective pipes, pipe joints, connections, or manhole walls.

The public works director said inflow and infiltration reduce the useful life and the capacity of sewer systems and negatively impacts treated effluent quality. He said the goal of the study is to identify sources, prioritize minor and major repairs to address the issues identified, and provide a suggested implementation plan.

Boudreau said the study will specifically include flow monitoring in late winter and early summer during wet and dry weather to identify areas of concern, manhole inspections to assess the condition and identify potential sources of infiltration, video inspection for a visual record of pipe condition and the location of defects, smoke testing to determine where storm

water or groundwater may be entering the sanitary sewer system by injecting pressurized artificial smoke in the collection system to identify areas of concern, and reporting.

Because the PCAP funding was recently approved, Boudreau expects the study will start next spring and finish in the late summer.

PCAP allows the province to contribute funds to priority municipal infrastructure projects, the government said, noting that this year’s investment across the province is \$1,206,247.

According to the province, PCAP is application-based and funds up to 50 per cent of project costs.

Mombourquette said the state of municipal infrastructure is one of council’s top priorities.

“Generally, our council recognizes that, as a county, we are in an infrastructure deficit with our water and sewer systems,” she noted. “We’ve tried to make it a priority to contribute to the reserves that are going to help us make sure that we can either upgrade those systems or eventually replace them. Sooner or later, they will come to the end of their lifespan and we will have to make a move to make sure people continue to have good quality water and sewer services available to them.”

In addition to providing residents with good infrastructure, the warden added there are environmental concerns.

“With climate change, we need to be paying attention to what kind of adaptations we need to make to make sure that these systems are functioning in a way that’s not going to contribute to any environmental problems,” she added.

“The study will identify the minor repairs, the major repairs and will provide a suggested implementation plan.”
- WARDEN AMANDA MOMBOURQUETTE



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The Municipality of the County of Richmond is undertaking a study of its Arichat sewage system thanks to more than \$40,000 from the province. The system sometimes experiences very high flows that may exceed the design capacity of the treatment infrastructure, which is approaching 50 years of age.

(File photo)

UARB approves water rate increase for Canso-Hazel Hill

■ BY LOIS ANN DORT

LOCAL JOURNALISM INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board (UARB) has approved an application from the Municipality of the District of Guysborough (MODG) for an increase in rates for the Canso-Hazel Hill Water Utility.

The NSUARB released its decision on Sept. 22.

As part of its application made last winter, the MODG commissioned and submitted a rate study, which was followed by a public hearing and acceptance by the UARB of public feedback both in person and via written communication.

The Canso-Hazel Hill Water Utility serves 450 customers.

The MODG applied to amend the water rates, as stated in the decision, “due to higher operating costs, reduced volume sold, fewer customers and to fund the projected capital program.”

The board received a letter against the proposed increase in rates from Monte J. Snow, on behalf of Fisherman’s Market. The letter voiced concerns about the increased cost that would be passed on to fishers by the company in the provision of water and ice for vessels.

The decision states, “He also noted that fishers and vessels have seen significant increases in costs due to inflation over the past 24 months, and any more increases will further impact in-

comes for fishers, operators and companies such as themselves.”

William Bond, president of the Eastern Guysborough County Ratepayers Association (EGCRA), made a request to speak before the board and was represented by Ginny Boudreau, a board member with EGCRA.

The UARB decision notes that the “EGCRA’s main concern was the size of the proposed increase and the allocation of those funds. The association also took issue with how the rate study and application were shared electronically with ratepayers.”

The proposed rate increases that were approved by the UARB are as follows: for the fiscal years 2022-23, 2023-24, and 2024-25, for unmetered customers, rate increases of 16.4, 3.7 and three per cent, respectively. For 5/8” meter residential customers, based upon average quarterly consumption, rate increases of 14.8, 2.5 and 1.9 per cent, respectively. For all other metered customers, based upon the average quarterly consumption for each meter size, rate increases between 9.9 to 28.4 per cent in 2022-23, 2.3 to 5.6 per cent in 2023-24 and two to 4.5 per cent in 2024-25.

The UARB decision can be found at nsuarb.novascotia.ca, in the hearings and decisions section.

Guysborough Journal



Residents of the Canso-Hazel Hill Water Utility will soon be paying more for their water after the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board approved a request for a rate increase.

(Unsplash photo)

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