

Maritime Provinces Water & Wastewater REPORT

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MPWWA PROFILE: Jody Comeau



BY STEPHEN PATRICK CLARE

Every issue, the MPWWR shines a spotlight on an MPWWA member making a difference in the industry. Jody Comeau is the focus of our April Issue.

Full story Page 4

Water problems in Japan

On March 14, three days after the 9.0 earthquake and the resulting tsunami, close to 1.4 million Japanese households did not have running water.

Full story Page 2

Canada Water Week encourages collaboration to preserve water resources

"Islanders working together to protect and conserve water is the best way to preserve it for future generations," Premier Robert Ghiz said March 14—the first day of Canada Water

Full story Page 5

Disconnected water pipe opens tap for lawsuit

BY KATHY JOHNSON

Unless ongoing discussions come up with a solution, the City of Saint John and the Town of Rothesay are headed to court.

Full story Page 7

Andrew Garnett's 'Note from the Chair' was not available at press time. It will return in July.



Jody Hawkins, a plant operator at the Battery Point municipal wastewater treatment facility in Sydney, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia sprays clean water into a clarifying tank — agitating the human waste and cleaning excess debris from the system to keep it flowing freely. The clarifying tanks are part of the treatment process that separates solids from water in the waste material. (See story on page 8) (Photo: Steve Wadden/Cape Breton Post)

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Sewage lift station upgrade on target

NEW GLASGOW NEWS

[Trenton, NS]—The second phase of the project that will see all 18 lift stations in the East River Environmental Control Centre system upgraded continued Monday (Jan. 17) in the Steeltown.

The small brick pump house building in the gravel parking lot along Main Street is being replaced as part of the project. The original station was built in 1973, said ERECC operations manager Anthony Sheehan, and will be replaced by an in-ground unit with access hatches for entry.

"This phase will be done by the end of February and this station will be done in about three weeks depending on the weather," he said at the site.

Six stations were upgraded last year, said Sheehan, and six more will be done in this phase. The Trenton station is the second one upgraded in Phase 2. There are pumping stations around various parts of the county, he added, that feed into the central sewage system.

Sheehan said there are several positives to the project.

"It's safer, there will be no confined space entries for staff. There will be a larger holding capacity for sewage and lower maintenance. There's lot of benefits, the biggest one is safety."

The work is being done by Antigonish Construction, said Sheehan, under the Build Canada Fund as part of the Economic Action Plan.



This lot along Main Street in Trenton, Nova Scotia was a hive of activity on Jan 17 as work began on Phase 2 of the pumping station upgrade project. (Photo: Ray Burns/The News)

Water problems in Japan

On March 14, three days after the 9.0 earthquake and the resulting tsunami, close to 1.4 million Japanese households did not have running water.

But a national emergency committee had distributed over 250,000 bottles of water and beer tankers were transporting water.

The committee had also deployed 5,000 mobile latrines.

On March 23 the water supply in Japan's capital city was declared unfit for babies because of radiation leaks from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant.

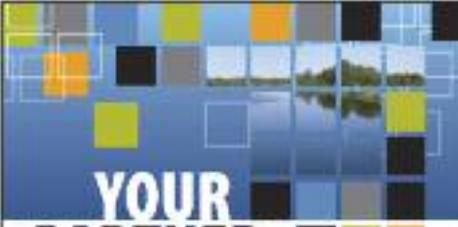
Tests found radioactive iodine levels were double the recommended amount that's safe for infants. The government warned that children under a year old should not drink tap water.

Health authorities explained that a great deal of tap water would have to be ingested before it proved harmful, and that the water posed no risk to others.

But bottled water quickly disappeared from store shelves in Tokyo. Consumers did not listen to the officials who implored them not to hoard water because that would deprive those without the resource in devastated areas of the country.

On March 24 the iodine levels in Tokyo were at an acceptable level, but increased in other areas. Bottled water was distributed by the city.

At press time there were at least 660,000 homes without water and over 200,000 without electricity. The number of people who had died or were missing was over 27,000.



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Fire hydrants not for public use, mayor says

■ BY HARRY SULLIVAN
TRURO DAILY NEWS

[Debert, NS]—The head of the company operating out of the Debert (Nova Scotia) bunker says officials fully believed they were following accepted practices when they requested to be hooked onto the municipal water system on Sunday (March 13).

“I do take issue with the idea that we are culprits in this matter, which would imply some culpability,” said Anton E. Self, CEO of Bastionhost Ltd., which operates an information technology data centre out of the former military bunker.

His comments came in response to a story in yesterday’s (March 14) Truro Daily News regarding the fact the company had the Debert fire department connect into the municipal water supply to refill a storage tank within the facility.

“Frankly, I also take issue with the idea that our access to the city water supply was unauthorized. Obviously we accessed it through the correct channels. I don’t see how accessing water through a fire plug for just over two hours through the fire de-

partment would be unauthorized,” he said. “It was actually a standard operating procedure at the bunker, although this was the first time we did it, to tap into the municipal water supply in exactly this manner. And it had been done many times before.”

Bastionhost tapped into the water system for just over two hours on Sunday, using some 32,000 gallons in the process, which led to residential complaints of pressure fluctuations and soiled water in home systems.

Colchester County Mayor Bob Taylor said in the initial story that while he didn’t fault the fire department for responding to the request from Bastionhost, the protocol for taking such action “... has to change.”

He reiterated that position on Tuesday (March 15).

“He’s partially right,” he said of Self’s position. “It might’ve been acceptable in the past before we (the municipality) took over the water utility (in about 2007).”

But such practice is not acceptable now, Taylor said, adding that fire hydrants have very specific

uses and filling private storage tanks is not one of them.

“We’re going to be in touch with the fire chief there too, just to explain to him that it was a problem ... and what the procedure will be from now on,” he said. “The fire hydrants are for the fire brigade for fire fighting and filling their trucks, but they are not for public use.”

The original story stated Bastionhost was using the water to cool its computer equipment, but Self said that was not the case. Rather, he said, it was used to refill a storage tank within the bunker that is used for the building’s purposes and its internal fire suppression system. But electrical components associated with the tank were being serviced, and in order to refill it, a request was made of the local fire brigade to connect to the municipal system.

“Had I had any idea that it would have caused problems for the municipal water supply we wouldn’t have considered this an option or, we, more significantly, would have limited to the flow of water,” Self said. “I certainly think that interrupting anyone’s water supply is a serious matter and I apologize to my neighbours for any incon-

venience we may have caused them.

But Taylor said the hookup should never have occurred as it did.

“We were never notified and we should be if they’re hooking into our water supply,” Taylor said. “I don’t know what it would have done if there had been a fire out there at the same time.”

The mayor also said Bastionhost has previously turned down the options of connecting to the municipal water system or drilling his own well.

“He’s been using a county well there for some time and we’ve never had an agreement signed. So, he pretty well knows the rules, what’s going on out there,” Taylor said.

“He’s not been co-operating with us at all. We’ve been waiting for him to come in and sign an agreement (to use the well)....”

“We’re well within our rights to cut off the water supply he has, we just haven’t done that. He should realize he has an obligation here too and he hasn’t lived up to it,” the mayor said. “There is a bit of history there. Quite a bit of history.”

A more even flow of water pressure would exist in firefighting, says official

■ BY HARRY SULLIVAN
TRURO DAILY NEWS

[Debert, NS]—The fluctuating water pressure and sediment issues created here on Sunday (March 13) when a fire hydrant was used to fill a storage tank would not occur in a fire fighting situation, a municipal official says.

“If there was a fire and there were three fire hy-

drants running out outright trying to douse the fire, that pulsing wouldn’t happen,” Colchester County Public Works director Ramesh Ummat said.

The Debert water utility is set up so that water is pumped into a municipal storage tower on McElmon Road, which serves to provide gravity-fed pressure to the system.

The system is also equipped with sensors that monitor the flow of water leaving the storage

tower.

In the event of a fire, when more water is being forced out of the tower by fire fighting equipment connected to hydrants, the sensors turn on two pumps that are used to increase the inflow.

On Sunday (March 13), however, when a hydrant was hooked into to refill a storage tank inside the Bastionhost Ltd., data centre, the outflow was not great enough to keep up with the water being pumped into the water tower, which in turn

created the fluctuation in pressure.

“In some cases, say for example in this case,” Ummat said, “if you open the hydrant just enough and quickly enough that the pressure just falls to trip those fire pumps, they will suddenly kick on and increase the pressure. But since the water is not being drawn from so many hydrants, the water that is being pumped in from those pressure pumps is high, so the pressure builds up quickly and they shut down.”

Controversy continues in Debert water pumping situation

■ BY HARRY SULLIVAN
TRURO DAILY NEWS

[Debert, NS]—The onus for completing a permanent arrangement for water services at the Bastionhost Ltd., data centre is completely in the hands of Colchester County officials, says company CEO Anton Self.

“I’ve left things in their hands. The ball is truly in their court,” Self said on Wednesday (March 16), while describing himself as being “vexed” over the way he has been publicly portrayed by the municipality.

“This is a bit ridiculous and his remarks are spurious,” Self said of Mayor Bob Taylor, regarding comments published this week in the Truro Daily News, which Self said makes it appear “... like we’re doing something wrong.”

Issues arose Sunday (March 13) when the company made a request of the Debert fire department to hook into the municipal water system via a fire hydrant to refill a storage tank within the facility at the former military bunker.

The move, which was not authorized by the county, resulted in soiled water and fluctuating water pressures for area residents.

Taylor has been quoted as saying that Self should have known better than to make the request of the fire department because of a change in policy since the municipality took over ownership of the Debert water utility several years ago. He also said that Self has been less than co-operative in trying to finalize an agreement for use of a county well the facility has been using.

Continued on page 19



A data centre located in this old military bunker in Debert, Nova Scotia was responsible for water issues in the area over the March 13 weekend. (File photo: Truro Daily News)



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MPWWA PROFILE: Jody Comeau

Every issue, the MPWWR shines a spotlight on an MPWWA member making a difference in the industry. Jody Comeau is the focus of our April Issue.

Jody Comeau wants to do things the right way

BY STEPHEN PATRICK CLARE

"I don't know – I guess that's just the way I was made." Jody Comeau is chuckling over the phone from Meteghan. The 44-year-old Public Works employee for the Municipality of Clare, along Nova Scotia's plush southwestern shore, is trying to explain why he likes to make things work properly.

"If something's not working the way it should, it's frustrating. So I look for a better way to do it. Maybe I've seen something done a little differently in another wastewater plant, so I will try to incorporate it," Comeau explains.

He's responsible for the area's three wastewater treatment plants and their collection systems.

"There's always something to do. One day it could be this, the next day it might be that. If there is one thing that I have learned in my 12 years here on the job it's that I can have the whole day or the entire week planned out and then with one phone call it can all be thrown right out the window," he laughs. "It keeps me on my toes, for sure."

One of Comeau's main objectives is to ensure that his three plants are up to standard and utilize the latest technology.

"Two of the three plants have UV lights that are safer for the operator and for the environment," he says.

"One plant still uses chlorine and I'm trying to get it converted to UV. I would like to get rid of the chlorine. I would hate to train somebody in a plant where the chemical is used. What if he does something wrong and is injured? I would always wonder if it had been my fault."

Comeau says an injury in a plant with UV lights might require a Band-Aid but in a plant with chlorine it could be very serious, even fatal.

"I have contacted the engineers and the environment department and UV light suppliers and have made a presentation to municipal officials."

He does not shoulder the workload alone.

"We brought in another guy on a semi-regular basis a few years ago who has his Level 1 Certificate and now we divvy-up the workload. It's made a big difference in terms of giving me a little more free time."

Comeau and his wife, Michelle, enjoy some of those off-hours with their two teenagers in Nova Scotia's great outdoors. "The weather is very fair to us up here," he notes, "so we often take the kids camping and canoeing. It's a beautiful part of the province and there is a lot to explore."

Interestingly, canoe activities are also a part of his commitment to the greater community.

"About three years ago a friend asked me if I wanted to get involved with the annual Relay For Life event here in Clare. Of course, being the kind of person that always wants to get in there and lend a hand, I said yes. But what I decided to do instead of going door-to-door asking for donations is that I organize a fundraiser.

"Each spring there is a two-day, 35 kilometer canoe trip here in the region, and my friends and I set up shop along the route and sell home-made curly fries to the participants. The first year we raised almost \$1,000. This year our goal is \$1,500."



Comeau adds that his "hands-on" philosophy serves him as well in his personal life as it does in his professional endeavors. "People ask me why I always look for something wrong in the way that things are done. In fact, what I am really looking for is a way to do it better. That's just the way I was made."

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4-Hers help launch Canada Water Week

BY GREG BENNETT
THE COAST GUARD

Members of the Roseway 4-H club in Shelburne (Nova Scotia) showcased their knowledge about the importance of water to mark Canada's first Water Week, March 14-22.

Projects and posters fashioned by local 4-H members lined the walls of Shelburne Regional High School during a special ceremony on Monday, March 7 to highlight the importance of protecting our water resources.

The occasion was emceed by members of the Roseway 4-H Club who spoke about their experiences with the program and its value to the community.

Shelburne MLA Sterling Belliveau took the opportunity to announce provincial funding of \$3,000 to Nova Scotia 4-H so that all clubs can be eligible for prizes of \$300 for first within each of the province's six 4-H regions and two \$100 runner-up prizes.

"Nova Scotians value their water and they want to see it protected and well managed," said Minister of Environment, Belliveau. "Canada Water Week is an opportunity for us to celebrate water as a resource and to consider water conservation. The 4-H Water Challenge is a great way to engage youth and the community to care about our water."

Clubs will become eligible by taking part in community water projects such as a stream clean up, vis-

iting a water treatment facility, conducting water testing, or carrying out water conservation practices.

"Through this project 4-H members and leaders will learn more about the importance of water and the value of protecting this important resource," said Ruth Grant, senior 4-H program co-ordinator with Department of Agriculture. "Clubs across the province will be developing community projects to celebrate the importance of protecting the water around us."

Belliveau also noted the province's new water strategy "Water for Life" during his address.

In August, Canadian premiers approved the Council of the Federation's water charter and initiated Canada Water Week.

Under the council banner -- Celebrating and Conserving Water Across Our Country -- provinces and territories are holding events and activities to draw attention to the importance of water for Canada's prosperity.

4-H is a nationwide program dedicated to the development of rural leadership skills of young people. In Nova Scotia, there are about 100 clubs in six regions. The Department of Agriculture works in partnership with the Nova Scotia 4-H council and its volunteer leaders and members.

For information on Nova Scotia's water resource management strategy Water for Life, visit <http://waterforlife.gov.ns.ca>.



Members of the Roseway 4-H club in Shelburne, Nova Scotia showcased their knowledge about the importance of water to mark Canada's first Water Week, March 14-22. In the photo Kaitlyn Harding and Chelsea Perry address the crowd at Shelburne Regional High School about their 4-H experiences. (Photo: Greg Bennett/The Coast Guard)

Canada Water Week encourages collaboration to preserve water resources

"Islanders working together to protect and conserve water is the best way to preserve it for future generations," Premier Robert Ghiz said March 14—the first day of Canada Water Week.

"Our drinking water is our most precious resource and we all share the responsibility to preserve the high quality of our water for future generations," he noted.

Canada Water Week (March 14-22) was initiated last year by the Canadian premiers during their 2010 Council of the Federation annual meeting. The week is aimed at increasing awareness of water issues and initiatives in the country.

"We want Islanders to become more familiar with the issues we face with our drinking water and consider what can be done to protect it in the future," Ghiz said.

Environment, Energy and Forestry Minister Richard Brown noted that Prince Edward Island is the only jurisdiction in Canada that gets all of its drinking water from groundwater. "So we have to make sure we take the necessary steps to ensure its preservation. Healthy water resources are also essential to the well-being of our wildlife and our economy."

Brown said PEI has an abundant quantity of water

and the forestry, fisheries, agriculture and tourism depend on healthy water resources.

In an effort to protect and preserve the quality of the province's water, including drinking water, government has:

- Dramatically increased funding for community-based watershed groups, improving the capacity of the groups to work on environmentally sustainable projects.
- Provided \$46 million of upgrades to water and wastewater facilities across the province.
- Enhanced buffer zone laws to protect streams, wet-

lands and coastal waters.

- Introduced the Alternative Land Use Services program, which retires sensitive agricultural land to reduce its impact on water resources.
- Launched online water data search web pages for Islanders to see results of drinking water and stream water samples and the levels of groundwater and streams
- Provided PST rebate on low flow fixtures. "Everyone can do something to help preserve the quality of our water and I am confident that Islanders can make this happen," the premier said.

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Three water main breaks on Labrador City street

■ BY PAULA BUGDEN

THE AURORA

The damage is done for John Collins since a water main break flooded his basement on Dec. 12, 2010. It's one of three water main breaks in the Bartlett Drive area in Labrador City (Labrador) since last August.

Collins was putting up Christmas decorations outside that day, he said, when he noticed water rising up from the ground. That's when he realized what had happened. He started digging a ditch to divert the water away from the house, he said, while his wife called the Town.

"I looked back and the gravel was still rising up; when I looked again, it just dropped – a three foot hole," he said.

Collins said he knew the water had to go somewhere. By the time he ran to his basement, he explained, it was already coming in fast. He ended up with five feet of water and about three feet of mud.

While he managed to save photo albums, he said, everything else in the basement was ruined. The family had made renovations and furnished their new rec room just two days before.

"We were just devastated," he said.

Once the Town turned off the water valves, Collins used a generator and sump pump to clear out the water. It took roughly seven hours to complete the task, he noted. It took two more days to clean up the mud.

The family had to stay in a hotel for six days before they could move back in.

After living in the house for 21 years, he said this

is the first time they've had flooding from a water main break.

Peter Boland, superintendent of Public Works in Labrador City, said water main breaks are hard to predict.

"Bartlett's a big street. It's not uncommon to get three or four breaks on one street or one area of town," he said. "I'm concerned about water breaks, but there's not a whole lot we can do about them. There's no real preventative thing you can do."

The pipes, which are roughly 50 years old and made of ductile iron, have been tested before and are good quality, he said.

As for the ground and water pH levels, Boland noted they're both in ideal conditions.

The last batch of test results came from samples done on June 2, 2010.

"Some municipalities have got aggressive water where you get corrosion around the pipes, but we haven't got that situation here," he said. "I wish I could predict them (breaks), but I can't."

Janice Barnes, mayor of Labrador City, said some years are worse than others when it comes to water main breaks in the town.

"If we could predict, we'd do everything we could to prevent," she told the Aurora. "It's small comfort to the people who've had the water breaks, I realize."

Chris Sirabian, who lives on Bartlett Drive, had flooding from a water main break last August. He said the town shouldn't be compared to other municipalities. He suggested the problem with the breaks may be connected to the fact that there are iron ore mining operations in the area.

"We have three or four mines in the neighbour-

hood that do constant blasting," he said. "We don't know what kind of damage the blasting is doing to internal pipes. It's beyond my expertise, but these are just thoughts..."

With the recent expansion in Labrador West, he added, people are taking more pride in their houses and the values have increased.

"I'd like to see the Town have more of a solid insurance in place for the citizens in this community," he said.

Boland said water main breaks are not only frustrating, but also costly, noting a typical repair could cost the Town up to \$10,000. Even so, he added, the cost of replacing all of the town's piping isn't realistic.

He said there's no obvious reason for the water main breaks.

According to Collins, a loose rock was the problem for the water main break near his house before Christmas. In the meantime, he said, he doesn't understand why the pipes are laid out on bedrock.

He still has to talk to a structural engineer later this month (January) to figure out the extent of the damage to his house, as well as the total cost for repairs. Collins said his homeowners' insurance will cover the cost. However, he feels the Town's insurance should pay for it, since the outside damage is what caused the flooding in his basement.

When a water main breaks on the Town's property and ends up causing interior damage to a house on someone else's property, it's up to the insurance adjustor to decide who's responsible for that cost, explained Town Manager Jeff Boland.

"We're limited to just providing all the facts about what we've found, and then the adjustor determines what happens," he said.

Aside from that, he added, the Town does cover the cost of excavating, lawn and ground repair when a water main break happens on the Town's property line.

As for Collins, he simply hopes this doesn't happen to him again, or to any other resident of Labrador City.

Banana peels purify water

The popularity of banana peels disappeared with Vaudeville but scientists have discovered they can be used to remove heavy metal, copper and lead from industrial waste, farm runoff and mining processes from waterways.

With no chemical modification, minced peel also removes copper and lead from river water.

According to a report in ACS's Industrial & En-

gineering Chemistry Research, Gustavo Castro and other researchers have found that their purification apparatus did not lose its metal-binding properties until it had been used 11 times.

WaterWorld said the complete text could be downloaded from: <http://pubs.acs.org/stoken/presspac/presspac/full/10.1021/ie101499e>

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City takes new approach to construction of water plant

■ BY CORY HURLEY
THE WESTERN STAR

[Corner Brook, NL]—The city (Corner Brook, Newfoundland & Labrador) is once again turning on the valve in its attempt to erect a new water treatment plant.

The project was put on hold after bids for the construction of the plant all came in over budget. The override would have put the city on the hook for nearly \$40 million alone. The project was only budgeted at \$43 million in total, to be cost-shared between the city and provincial and federal governments.

The city went back to the drawing board and is now progressing under a design/build process. The request for proposals for an owners engineer to oversee the design/build was approved at Monday evening's (Jan. 31) regular monthly meeting of council. It is hoped this approach — which has to be approved by the provincial government — will lead to

cost savings over the typical tender process.

Mayor Neville Greeley said the owners engineer will represent the city's best interest in all aspects of the project. The process also allows the city to decide in advance of the bidding process who will build the water system and which type, the mayor said. He also said it eliminates extended delays in the process.

"We have been told, from the time the contract is awarded in a design/build — based on the type of water we have — to the time they actually finish the project, you are looking at 18 months," Greeley said. "As a result of not having equipment and everything else tied up for a long period of time, there is inherent savings in that."

The mayor said the request for proposal begins the process, but the bid will still have to meet the \$43 million price tag budgeted for the project. He said things will proceed as the city awaits approval from the provincial government to use the design/build approach to the tender process in order to speed up the overall project.

Water rates going up in Springhill

■ AMHERST DAILY NEWS

[Springhill, NS]—The cost of using water in Springhill is about to go up.

The Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board has approved the town's application to increase water rates in the community.

Ratepayers within the former mining town are looking at a 25 per cent increase in water rates over the next three years for unmetered, mainly residential

customers.

Rates are going up 14.3 per cent for the 2010-11 fiscal year, 10.7 per cent in 2011-12 and 0.7 per cent in 2012-13.

For metered services, the increases range from 12.3-14.8 per cent in 2010-11, 10.4-11.2 per cent in 2011-12 and 0.3-0.9 per cent in 2012-13.

The fire protection charge is also going up.

Most of Springhill's residents are unmetered, unlike Amherst where the majority are on water meters.

Disconnected water pipe opens tap for lawsuit

■ BY KATHY JOHNSON

Unless ongoing discussions come up with a solution, the City of Saint John and the Town of Rothesay are headed to court.

City Council commenced legal proceedings against Rothesay in February, after the neighbouring town disconnected the Saint John water supply to Kennebecasis Park and Hastings Cove neighborhoods and reconnected the area to the town's own water system.

The action has created water quality problems and concerns for New Brunswick's Port City, affecting customers in the Rothesay Road area.

The City contends Rothesay has acted in contravention of a 1996 agreement with Rothesay's predecessor, the Village of Renforth respecting the supply of water by the City to the areas known as Kennebecasis Park and Hastings Cove, that were amalgamated with the Town of Rothesay in the 1990s.

The City is suing for the loss of customers and for construction costs to fix the problems created by having a dead end pipe on the system.

However, before legal action is formally filed with the courts, the two sides will be meeting to try and resolve the situation.

"A preliminary meeting has been held with City and Town officials," said John Jarvie, Rothesay's town manager via email. "Further meeting(s) are expected in April."

Meanwhile Saint John continues, "to flush the line to keep the water flow up" to mitigate water quality issues in the short term, said City spokesperson Leah Fitzgerald in an interview.

Research is also being done to find a long-term solution, she said.

The addition of Kennebecasis Park and Hastings Cove to the Town of Rothesay's water supply is part of an ongoing upgrade to the town's water system that is expected to be completed this spring at a cost of more than \$9 million, Jarvie said.

"The Town supply to its customers is working as intended," he said, adding Rothesay council has indicated that it would assist the City to resolve its problems if there is something Rothesay can do.

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Municipality facing financial burden due to tighter timeline on wastewater strategy

■ BY CHRIS SHANNON

THE CAPE BRETON POST

[Sydney, NS]—The combination of constructing sewage collector systems and building treatment plants under a new, tighter 10-year timeline will force a \$425-million financial burden over the next decade on the Cape Breton Regional Municipality as part of its commitment to fulfill regulations under the Canada-wide municipal wastewater effluent strategy.

CBRM director of public works and engineering Wayne MacDonald said Monday (March 14) changes to the federal Fisheries Act will mean the discharge of untreated sewage will not be permitted beyond 2021.

“The rule is that once this is published then wastewater, above the guidelines of the new rules, becomes a deleterious substance. That’s what is really scary,” MacDonald said.

MacDonald clarified that the total cost of building eight facilities in the communities rated in the “high” risk assessment category, with adjoining collector systems is an estimated \$425 million.

The shortened timeline to 10 years is due to the close proximity within 500 metres of shellfish harvesting and recreation areas.

Those areas include the Northside area of North Sydney, Sydney Mines and Florence, Glace Bay/Reserve Mines, New Waterford/Scotchtown, Coxheath/Westmount, Louisbourg, New Victoria,

Donkin and Port Morien.

The retrofit at the Battery Point wastewater facility in Sydney, considered a “medium” risk, must be completed within 20 years. Other communities in the CBRM such as Meadow Brook, Birch Grove, Villa Drive, Centreville, Tower Road and Southwest Brook are rated a “low” risk, and must be brought in line with environmental regulations within 30 years.

The municipal wastewater effluent strategy has set out national performance standards requiring minimum standards for effluent quality. Total suspended solids must be no more than 25 mg/L, and total residual chlorine must not measure any more than 0.02 mg/L, as well, carbonaceous biochemical oxygen demand must meet 25 mg/L.

New or upgraded facilities will be required to meet or exceed these standards when they start operating.

“Initially we were told we had 30 years because we didn’t know what the risk would be. Well, now, the (Department of) Environment has said, based on the guidelines, your risks indicate that these facilities have to be completed in 10 years,” MacDonald said.

“Even the small systems didn’t have as much risk as the larger ones.”

The entire wastewater treatment strategy is expected to cost the CBRM approximately \$454 million. The operating budget has been estimated at \$10 million a year.

He said requests to officials at the Department of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations seeking guidance on possible funding structures have so far gone unanswered.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities, as well as the Atlantic Mayors’ Congress, among other groups, have lobbied Ottawa for a more

comprehensive funding strategy led by the federal government.

The total cost to implement the strategy, including capital and non-capital costs, is estimated at \$10-\$13 billion nationwide, depending on inflation, over the next three decades.

STINKY STATS

These CBRM wastewater facilities have been rated as “high” risk level for raw effluent discharge, forcing the municipality to upgrade nine plants by 2021 instead of the longer 20- to 30-year time frame.

Facility	Flow (cubic metre/day)	Environmental Special uses
-North Sydney/Sydney Mines	20,000	Shellfish harvesting area
-Glace Bay/Reserve	20,000	Shellfish harvesting area
-New Waterford/Scotchtown	10,000	Shellfish harvesting area
-Coxheath/Westmount	10,000	None
-Florence	3,000	Recreation area downstream
-Louisbourg	1,500	Shellfish harvesting area
-New Victoria	1,200	Recreation area downstream
-Donkin	600	Shellfish harvesting area
-Port Morien	600	Shellfish harvesting area

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Funds will go to wastewater collection in Sydney

STAFF ~ THE CAPE BRETON POST

[Sydney, NS]—The provincial and federal governments have announced funding support for a \$15.3-million project that will allow the Cape Breton Regional Municipality to make maximum use of the Battery Point sewage treatment plant.

The provincial and federal governments will each contribute \$5.1 million through the Building Canada Fund. The CBRM will contribute \$2.5 million as well as any outstanding project costs.

Federal funding of about \$2.5 million will also be provided through the gas tax fund.

The money was anticipated and was included in last year's municipal budget, noted Mayor John Morgan.

"It was something that was in our infrastructure plans for last year and this year, so we're really

happy that it's been announced and we're ready to proceed with it, we think even this spring," he said.

Morgan added the CBRM wasn't necessarily expecting the announcement to come this week (March 25), but the pending federal election may have played a role in the timing.

More than 3,400 cubic metres per day of untreated wastewater currently flow through 14 outfalls into Sydney harbour. It will now be sent for treatment. The project will also allow for the collection of wastewater from the Pine Tree Park wastewater system.

The project will see piping installed and lift stations constructed to carry wastewater to the Battery Point wastewater treatment plant.

The project has been a priority for CBRM because it invested a lot of money in the Battery

Point plant and this will allow the municipality to make more full use of it.

"It currently treats most of the wastewater coming from the Sydney area but not all of it, so what this will do is allow us to really make maximum usage out of the treatment plant on Battery Point and really make a significant impact on Sydney harbour as well," Morgan said.

By eliminating the sewage outfalls on the eastern side of Sydney harbour, the CBRM will also be able to complete the trail network from Sydney River to downtown Sydney, as identified under its active transportation plan, Morgan said.

"That door is going to be open with this as well, because as we go through the process, most of the outfalls are along that stretch of land by Sydney harbour, so it opens a secondary opportunity for

active transportation in the region," Morgan said.

While this funding is welcome, it doesn't address concerns recently raised by Morgan regarding the CBRM's broader pending wastewater responsibilities.

With nine communities in the municipality falling under the high risk level category for raw effluent discharge, the combination of constructing sewage collector systems and building treatment plants must be complete and operational within 10 years, at a total cost of \$425 million.

John MacDonell, the minister of Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations, and Peter MacKay, the minister of National Defence, on behalf of Chuck Strahl, the minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities, announced the funding Friday (March 25).

No tax increases in Cornwall

BY DAVE STEWART

THE GUARDIAN

[Cornwall, PEI]—For the fifth year in a row, the Town of Cornwall (Prince Edward Island) isn't asking its residents or commercial tenants to pay a penny more in taxes.

Council passed a \$3.5-million budget Wednesday night (March 16) that will see the town invest \$100,000 in a series of small capital projects and move forward with the lagoon and sidewalk projects.

But the town is holding the line on the municipi-

pal tax and utility rates. There is also no change in program or planning fees, no additional positions being created and no additional town debt.

"Council didn't want to borrow any money this year and wanted to keep the rates (where they are)," said Mayor Glen Fullerton. "Nobody likes to see tax hikes and rate increases. We know they're going to happen (eventually but) if they don't have to happen let's try to keep them at a minimum if we can."

The tax rate remains unchanged at 46 cents per \$100 of assessment on non-commercial properties

and 81 cents per \$100 of assessment on commercial properties.

Residents will pay the same \$474 for water and sewer that they paid last year after getting hit with a \$24 hike in last year's budget. The rate in Cornwall is slightly less than it is in Charlottetown.

The town's budget splits into \$2,584,000 for general operations and \$961,900 for the utility.

Council intends to invest \$100,000 in a series of smaller capital projects, including a utility vehicle for the Terry Fox Complex, security cameras, a security gate for the maintenance building and

scoreboards and a broadcast booth for the Terry Fox Complex.

Council will also move forward with two projects funded with federal (gas tax) dollars — upgrading the town's lagoon and sidewalks for Cornwall Road.

The lagoon project could be in the \$500,000 range.

"We've got to do some major work to our lagoon and that's going to take top priority," Fullerton said. "The lagoon will be one of our biggest projects this year."

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Sewer rates set to rise

■ BY ASHLEY THOMPSON
THE HANTS JOURNAL

Living paycheque to paycheque may get even harder for people who rely on the Town of Windsor's sewer system.

At their regular monthly meeting March 8, Windsor's (Nova Scotia) committee of the whole unanimously agreed to enter into negotiations with Stantec for design, construction oversight and contract management services for a new wastewater treatment facility.

Excluding unforeseen costs, the project carries a \$7-million price tag. At the meeting, Don Beatty, Windsor's director of Public Works, said this means property owners connected to the town's sewer system will be subjected to increased sewer usage rates.

"The long and short of it is there's no question that these rates are going to see substantial hikes that are going to be a burden to the users of the sewer system but... the only alternative you have is to cover these costs under the general tax rate," Beatty said.

"It would be much less fair because you end up in a situation where tax-exempt properties are getting a break on their sewer costs simply because they don't pay taxes. The sewer rate is the most logical and equitable way to proceed with full cost recovery."

Town staff submitted a recommendation report requesting that council "approve a five year rate structure proposed in the G.A. Isenor Consulting Limited Sewer Rate Study dated Feb. 5, 2011 and that the rates be made effective April 1, 2011."

Beatty said rates will vary according to consumption — which is the demand a property places on the system and the user's ability to draw water — and meter size.

The proposed rate structure presented in the report submitted to council will see sewer fees increase

steadily for the next five years. The report lists the existing quarterly charge for a standard meter size (15mm) at \$36.27. However, that will soon change. The proposed quarterly charge recommended for the same meter size in 2011/12 is \$63.13. In 2015/16, the report proposes a quarterly charge of \$129.13.

Within the four-year period, the quarterly cost would rise by nearly \$100.

"You can't leave yourself in a situation where a customer shuts the water off and you stop getting money from that resident. There's still that cost just to be hooked up to the system," he said.

Beatty said the rate hikes are necessary to manage the ongoing operational costs of maintaining the facility, and to help pay for the new plant.

"We (town staff) felt it was essential to go this way because if we're going to enter into a \$7-million dollar project, such as we proposed here, we have to be sure that we can sustain the operating costs that are going to be created by this project and also the debt servicing costs that are going to be created."

Mayor Paul Beazley accepted Beatty's recommendations and suggested there may be "municipal green-funding options" available to help with the debt servicing.

Deputy Mayor Laurie Murley agreed the rate hikes seemed to be the most appropriate source of financing for the project.

"It's a tough pill to swallow but... I think this is a prudent way to move forward," she said.

TOWN ATTEMPTING TO BEAT REGULATIONS

In a follow up interview after the committee of the whole meeting, Beatty explained why the town is upgrading their existing sewage treatment facilities.

"The sewer treatment is required to meet the new regulations that are currently released by the federal and provincial regulatory boards, the departments of environment," he said.

"Within 10 years, any untreated sewage being dumped into receiving waters has to be fully treated and addressed. This is our attempt to get ahead of the regulation deadline and to make sure that we treat our effluent in an environmentally-responsible manner."

Kings' sewer contracts awarded

■ BY KIRK STARRATT

KINGS COUNTY ADVERTISER/REGISTER

Kings County (Nova Scotia) council has awarded two contracts for sewer work.

Western Plumbing and Heating has been awarded the contract for upgrades to the headworks building at the regional sewage treatment plant, worth \$474,984 plus HST. The work includes building modifications, HVAC system (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) upgrades and installation of new rotating drum screens and plumbing equipment.

Municipal staff is handling the building demolition component and a lot of the electrical work. The project is two-thirds funded by the Build Canada Fund, with the remaining third funded through the

five regional users. The county's share is 15 per cent.

Mid Valley Construction made an unsuccessful bid for \$637,857.

Council has awarded the contract for work on a new sewage holding tank for the Avonport sewage treatment plant to Roscoe Construction Limited for \$46,988.81 plus HST. The new tank will help with larger peak flows into the plant and reduce the chance of an upset.

Mid Valley Construction (1997) Limited made an unsuccessful bid of \$48,280, Buildon Construction Limited \$80,034 and Howard Little Excavating Limited \$54,244. The bid prices shown for Buildon and Roscoe were changed for mathematical errors. These corrections resulted in minor changes in their prices and had no impact on the final bid order. One bidder was disqualified for non-compliance with tender requirements.

Taken to the cleaners

Artesian Water and the City of Georgetown will install carbon filtration equipment to ensure that the drinking water in Delaware will surpass environmental and health standards.

The two water suppliers announced March 16 that the new filtration systems would remove tetrachlorethylene from their products.

Used by dry cleaners, tetrachlorethylene has been classified as "probably" carcinogenic. The chemical is on a list of contaminants that the EPA will review.

Delaware's Division of Public Health is considering lowering the state's permissible tetrachlorethylene levels.

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Water main pipe breaks in Moncton

■ BY ANDY WALKER

A major water main break near the Highfield Pumping Station March 2 forced approximately 30,000 individuals and businesses in the northeast and northwest areas Moncton, New Brunswick to boil water for several days as a precautionary measure.

Crews from the city's water services department were hampered in their task of shutting off the 70-year-old pipe that was spewing 5,000 gallons of water a minute by the weather conditions. Ensor Nicholson, the city's director of water systems, said the valves were located under deep snowdrifts. That sparked concern of possible contaminants entering the water system and the bio water order was in effect until there had been two negative tests. The order was lifted March 4.

The break occurred on Wheeler Boulevard, close to the Highfield Station. Jack MacDonald, the general manager of engineer for the city, told reporters, the pipe showed signs of corrosion. The city has over 400 kilometres of underground pipe—some of it over 100 years old.

Highfield Pumping Station, the main pumping

station for the Hub City, dates back to 1913 and has been declared an historic landmark by the American Water Works Association.

The leak resulted in reduced water pressure for several hours, but full pressure was restored when the water was rerouted to other lines.

Neither of the city's hospitals, nor the university, were impacted by the break. The suburban communities of Dieppe and Riverview, who purchase water from their larger neighbour, were also unaffected since their water is directly gravity fed from the processing facility at Turtle Creek.

The fire department stations in the impacted areas distributed bottled water and sales of bottled water were also brisk at area stores during the boil order.

Moncton's aging infrastructure is a common concern among municipalities throughout the country and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has been pressing Ottawa for additional dollars to combat the program.

MacDonald told reporters it would take \$42 million to bring the system up to current standards. He said the city does approximately \$3 million worth of work each year and attempts to prioritize the work that has to be done.



Public work crews were on the scene early on Church Street in New Glasgow, Nova Scotia on March 8 trying to repair a water main break. One town worker said he noticed the break at about 2 a.m. on his way to work. He said both the backhoe and a town truck sunk into the ground where the break occurred. The truck had to be pulled out of the hole. (Photo: Sueann Musick/The News)

More Kings County water for 14 Wing Greenwood

■ BY KIRK STARRATT

KINGS COUNTY ADVERTISER/REGISTER

The Greenwood Water Utility will continue to provide water to 14 Wing Greenwood - at least for the next six months.

Kings County (Nova Scotia) council agreed to the service extension at a special meeting March 15.

Engineering and public works manager Scott Quinn said 14 Wing requested permission to connect its water distribution system to the Greenwood Water Utility in March 2010 after contaminants were discovered in wells at 14 Wing. Council initially agreed to supply water for six months, pending a technical assessment and regulatory approval. In October 2010, council granted a six-month extension, set to expire March 31.

Municipal staff received a request from 14 Wing for another six-month extension, to Sept. 30, 2011. The base is working to site new production wells, with construction already underway on one. Additional infrastructure will be required to connect new wells to the existing base system, and the expected six-month timeline to complete the work seems reasonable.

The provincial Department of Environment has been kept apprised and continues to monitor the situation. 14 Wing has agreed to continue to compensate the municipality for all water usage, paying the utility's rate including the capital portion.

"They've been a good customer," Warden Diana Brothers said.

Quinn said the utility has been operating near the permitted withdrawal rate and, on five occasions since October 2010, the base exceeded its nor-



Kings County Nova Scotia Engineering and Public Works Manager Scott Quinn says, under the circumstances, another extension to the municipal water provision agreement with 14 Wing Greenwood is acceptable. (File Photo: Kings County Advertiser/Register)

mal demand by about five per cent. This resulted in minor operational impacts, such as extended pump runs. Quinn said three of these instances were due to extra demand and two were due to water quality issues within a facility on the base when additional water was needed for flushing. All five events were short in duration the utility's systems were not compromised. He pointed out this rate is based on pump capacity, not the capacity of the water source, and there have been no apparent signs of strain.

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Opening the taps in Bay de Verde

■ BY TERRY ROBERTS
THE COMPASS

A major water improvement project described by the mayor of Bay de Verde (Newfoundland & Labrador) as a "financial lifeline" continues to be stalled because of the town's debt problems, and Gerard Murphy is growing increasingly frustrated by the delays.

The nearly \$3 million project was first announced in May 2009, with the provincial govern-

ment committing just over \$1.6 million, the federal government agreeing to pay just over \$950,000, and the town pledging some \$285,000.

The project will see the construction of a new dedicated water line for the seafood processing facility, a major employer in the region. The water for the plant will be unfiltered and unchlorinated.

The project will also result in a dramatic improvement of the quality and quantity of water available to residents, especially during the months when the seafood plant is in production, said Mayor Murphy.

The cost of operating the system will also drop substantially, since the system will be "gravity flow," meaning there will no longer be a need to pump water and one of the town's most familiar landmarks, the water tower, can be removed.

"This could be Bay de Verde's opportunity," Murphy said during a recent (late March) interview with The Compass.

'Ridiculous' formula

But the months have slowly ticked away since the money was first announced, and there's still no sign the project will get started in 2011.

What's the hold-up? Lending institutions do not like what they see when they look at the town's balance sheet.

Some 37 per cent of the town's roughly \$1.33 million annual operating budget goes to debt payments, a consequence largely of the millions spent on water and sewer projects over the years.

Banks tend to get a little skittish about lending to municipalities when debt charges exceed 30 per cent, Murphy explained, describing the formula as "ridiculous."

But Bay de Verde, with less than 500 permanent residents, is not your typical small town. It's one of the busiest fishing ports in the province, and people come from far and wide to work at the sprawling crab and shrimp processing plant located on the north shore of Conception Bay. The facility is owned by Quinlan Brothers Limited.

The town is operating with a surplus on its current account, and its annual budget is far larger than most other communities its size.

What's more, the water supply project will inject thousands more dollars into the town's already bulging coffers through user fees charged to Quinlan Brothers, and savings from operational and maintenance costs.

"It's a win-win for Bay de Verde. This water supply is a real revenue generator," said Murphy.

Despite all this, Bay de Verde has been unable to come up with the money to pay its share of the project, and Murphy is angry the provincial government is not doing more to help out.

Murphy described the amount involved as "hardly the cost of a home by today's standards," yet the banks continue to give the town the cold shoulder.

The town has suggested that the province agree to a loan guarantee, but to no avail.

Big demand for water

The plant requires vast amounts of water to operate. The company has even resorted to trucking water into the community, and also has a system of pumps to bring ocean water into the plant. And during peak demand at the plant, homeowners experience low pressure and silt in their water.

Murphy said the project will address all these problems.

"Right now our system is outdated, inefficient and overtaxed."

Last year, the town supplied some 55 million gallons of water to the plant at a cost of \$1.25 per 1,000 gallons. But the plant requires between 80 and 90 million gallons, and this figure could rise substantially if a new chitin/chitosan production facility being proposed by the company is built.

The new system will easily handle the growing demand, Murphy said.

And the rates charged to the company are on their way up. It has since increased to \$1.45 per 1,000 gallons, and will go up again to \$1.75 on July 1.

"As you can see, this is our financial lifeline," Murphy said. "Two to three years of putting water through this proposed line; the revenue generated from that will pretty well pay off our borrowing costs."

"And every year we forego this project it's a tremendous loss of revenue," he added.

But Murphy is not ready to give up. He said the town will come up with its share of the cost, but not because of any help from the provincial government.

"I can certainly not give the Department of Municipal Affairs, in any way, shape or form, any credit for it when we do get it done," he said. "All I know is I'm not going to let that money slip through our hands and possibly jeopardize the future of our town."



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Kingsport gets municipal water- finally

■ BY KIRK STARRATT
KINGS COUNTY ADVERTISER/REGISTER

Jim Taylor can't believe it took this long to get Kingsport (Nova Scotia) residents hooked up to a municipal water supply.

The Kingsport central water project has been in the works for a number of years. Former councillor and deputy warden, the late Bert Greene, first championed the cause. Taylor, the current councillor, worked with municipal staff and stakeholders in the Villages of Canning and Kingsport to see the project through.

In 2003, the Kingsport project was in line to receive federal and provincial funding, but area residents allowed Greenwich to take the top spot on the municipality's priority list because of the severity of water problems there. In return, Kingsport was to be considered the top priority in the next round of infrastructure funding.

"I can't believe it took this long to accomplish it," Taylor says. "I'm really relieved these people are receiving their water."

A number of people in Kingsport were experiencing problems with water quality and quantity and wanted access to a central water system. Many area residents are experiencing salt water intrusion in

wells, hard on appliances. Even if residents don't want to hook up to the new system now, they have the option to do so in future. Another plus is the extra degree of fire protection offered by newly installed fire hydrants.

There should be a permanent contract between the county and Village of Canning for the operation of the Kingsport system by March. County council approved a motion Dec. 21 to have the municipality operate the Kingsport system until then. This allowed some residents to be hooked up before Christmas.

A lot of infrastructure work was required in Canning prior to the Kingsport system coming on line: it wasn't as simple as flicking a switch. A new reservoir was built and another well drilled. Those who endorsed the petition for the service had to make a significant financial commitment, as the resident portion ended up working out to \$6,000 per property. Taylor says this is more affordable than the minimum hook-up cost of \$10,000 in the Halifax Regional Municipality: some people in HRM have had to pay as much as \$27,000.

The project cost approximately \$2,450,000, including a \$550,000 contribution from the municipality's allocation of federal gas tax revenues. The gas tax contribution is to be recouped in part through the connection cost charged to residents.



Kingsport, Nova Scotia area residents now have access to a central municipal water supply, an infrastructure initiative in the works for the better part of a decade. (File Photo: Kings County Advertiser/Register)

Collecting donations for Japan

The World Water Council is supporting the Japan Water Forum that is collecting donations for drinking water and toilets for the people who suffered due to 2011 Tohoku-Pacific Ocean Earthquake in Japan.

For those interested in donating, visit: http://waterforum.jp/eng/2011/Japan_Earthquake/

For inquiries, contact the Japan Water Forum, Attn: Ms. Kaori Kondo, Tel: 03-5645-8040 FAX: 03-5645-8041, E-mail: charity4water@waterforum.jp.

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World Water Day recognized in NL

Water plays a significant role in every city, town and community in Newfoundland & Labrador, Ross Wiseman said March 22.

"As an essential element for life, it is important that we do our part to manage this resource and implement the necessary measures to ensure its safety and sustainability for our residents," the Minister of Environment and Conservation stated.

World Water Day is held annually on March 22 as a means of bringing attention to the importance of fresh water in the world while advocating for the sustainable management of its resources.

This year the objective of World Water Day was to focus attention on the impacts of urban population growth, industrialization and the effects of climate

change and natural disasters on urban water systems. This year's theme was 'Water for Cities: Responding to the Urban Challenge.'

"Recent weather events throughout the world and, certainly the devastation to community infrastructure in our own province this past fall as a result of hurricane Igor, reiterate the focus that needs to be maintained on the sustainability of our communities, with fresh, clean water being an important factor in the equation," Wiseman said. "Newfoundland and Labrador has been recognized in many ways for our innovative approach to managing our water resources. World Water Day is a time to celebrate these accomplishments."

Preparing for storms

Municipalities could save a lot of money and heartache if larger culverts were installed that would handle heavy rains like those from Hurricane Igor, McIvers Mayor Warren Blanchard suggested at a workshop on Increased Storms and Weather Hazards.

Questions about more frequent extreme weather events, minimizing potential destruction and others were discussed March 28 in Corner Brook at the workshop co-hosted by ACAP Humber Arm and the Department of Environment and Conservation.

Among the speakers were Martin Batterson of Natural Resources and Glenn McGillivray of the Toronto-

based Institute for Catastrophic Loss Reduction.

Blanchard's suggestion was the type of planning that's growing in importance because of the environmental impact of climate change, McGillivray said in The Western Star.

His workshop presentation dealt with international trends regarding severe weather, national trends and solutions to address increasing property damages that result from the environment and weather systems. He said climate change, increasing populations and aged infrastructure all played roles in the amount of property that was destroyed.

Water purification systems sent to Japan

Aqua-Chem Inc., a complete water purification solutions provider, is working through the U.S. State Department to make two mobile purification systems available to the Japanese government to help victims of the earthquake and tsunami.

One of the two mobile purification units being offered is capable of processing up to 1.2 million gallons a day from sources as readily available as ocean water.

The Knoxville, Tennessee company noted that U.S. Navy ships participating in the relief effort have eight of Aqua-Chem's water purification systems installed

that can provide thousands of additional gallons of potable water on behalf of the United States.

President & CEO David Gensterblum said the offer was made in response to the enormous logistical needs of dealing with a human and environmental disaster of this magnitude. "It is an unfortunate reality of circumstances like this that one of the most pressing needs is the availability of fresh water. We want to be a good corporate citizen worldwide, and this is one way we can help relieve the victims of this disaster and make a difference."



On March 13, water was overflowing from behind the Needs on North Foord Street in Stellarton, Nova Scotia and flooding onto the road. (Photo: Adam MacInnis/The News)

Town soon to fix culvert: cause of flooding on North Foord

THE NEW GLASGOW DAILY NEWS

[Stellarton, NS]—Stellarton's (Nova Scotia) town engineer Tony Addis will likely be celebrating when the collapsed tunnel is fixed under North Foord Street.

The collapsed box culvert that caused the sinkhole on North Foord Street in November of 2009 has been causing recent (March 14) flooding on North Foord Street near the Needs gas bar.

Addis said since the culvert that draws water to the river is blocked, two pumps have been installed to transfer water to storage areas in a gully built along Lawrence Boulevard. He said with the increase in temperatures, rainfall and melting snow was two much for the storage areas and they gully began to

overflow.

"We knew at some stage water could come over the top of it," said Addis. "The water followed the route through the Sobey's driveway and down the parking lot to the river."

He said it is more of an inconvenience than a catastrophe.

Addis said an engineering study was completed and the town will be replacing the collapsed tunnel. He said the town will put the project to tender in April or May and fully anticipates the new tunnel will be completed and operational by Christmas. The old tunnel will be properly stabilized.

Addis said there is a low risk of another subsidence occurring in the area.

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Decade of Commitment to clean and safe drinking water

Tony Skiffington of Gambo was recognized during the 10th annual Clean and Safe Drinking Water Workshop with the Newfoundland & Labrador's 2011 Operator of the Year Award.

Environment and Conservation Minister Ross Wiseman presented the 2011 Volunteer Operator of the Year Award to two volunteer operators: John Braye and Edmond Fudge of Brighton.

"The overwhelming number of nominations and letters of support we receive for these awards is a testimony to the dedication and hard work of the drinking water operators in our towns and communities, a number of whom are volunteers," the minister said.

"It is an honour to present these awards to such deserving individuals, and I also want to congratulate the numerous other operators who were nominated."

The annual Clean and Safe Drinking Water workshops were developed to provide water system operators and owners in the province with technical information on drinking water systems from water industry experts from across Canada

and the US. The workshops are scheduled each year around World Water Day - March 22.

The theme of this year's event, held March 22-24 in Gander, was "Decade of Commitment".

"Delivering clean and safe drinking water to the residents of Newfoundland and Labrador is a challenging responsibility for communities, and this workshop provides an opportunity for operators to come together to increase their knowledge and share real-life local experiences," Wiseman stated.

The Department of Municipal Affairs also recognizes the importance of the conference. It provides participants with a travel subsidy that allows them to attend.

Municipal Affairs Minister Kevin O'Brien said, "We are pleased to help operators of drinking water systems throughout the province attend this worthwhile event which, in turn, helps them bring valuable knowledge back to their respective towns and communities."

NB ensures a healthy water supply

New Brunswickers were encouraged to celebrate Canada Water Week, March 14 - 22.

"In New Brunswick we are fortunate to have excellent freshwater resources in terms of both quality and quantity," said Premier David Alward. "In order to maintain healthy communities and a healthy environment, we must work together to encourage water stewardship and conservation. We want to ensure a healthy water supply for future generations of New Brunswickers."

In New Brunswick, municipal water systems deliver clean water to their respective communities either from groundwater drawn from wells, or from surface water, such as lakes and rivers. There are also more than 100,000 private wells in the province, supplying drinking water to about 300,000 people.

"The Department of Environment has strong protection in place under the Clean Water Act and the Watershed and Wellfield Protection programs to protect drinking water supplies," said Environment Minister Margaret-Ann Blaney. "As New Brunswickers we must all work together

to ensure that our water supplies remain clean and sustainable."

New Brunswickers were told they could conserve and protect water supplies by:

- washing full loads of laundry each time to save water and electricity;
- using a bucket and sponge instead of a running hose to wash a car;
- buying products that take less water to produce;
- performing regular maintenance on septic tanks and wells (twice a year);
- collecting water in a rain barrel to use for watering flowers and trees;
- using a broom instead of water to clean your driveway;
- washing dishes by hand when possible as dishwashers use a lot of water and electricity;
- restoring shoreline vegetation to reduce erosion along lakes and rivers; and
- using eco-friendly detergents, shampoos and soaps.

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Flushing rates rise higher than tidal surge

■ BY STEVE SHARRATT
THE GUARDIAN

(Georgetown, PEI)—The day of the cheap flush is over.

Once the least expensive place on the Island to operate a toilet, the Kings County (Prince Edward Island) capital is bracing for rates as high as a tidal surge.

"We didn't have a choice," said Mayor Lewis Lavandier. "We're at overcapacity and the provincial Environment Department said we need to upgrade and bring our lagoon up to standard."

The walls of the town lagoon won't likely be breached, but Lavandier admits concern over tidal surges and unpredictable weather is one reason for a major upgrade of the system and a hike in the sewer

taxes.

Since there hasn't been an increase since 1982, new rates will more than double as they are phased in over the next two years. Currently \$96 a year, they will rise to \$220 by 2012. The increase was included in a balanced budget delivered here Monday night with no property tax increases.

Georgetown sits on the shores of Cardigan Bay, a major tourism area of the Three Rivers region, and with no shortage of mussel leases throughout the waterway. Contamination from a breached lagoon could pose significant problems.

A public meeting held earlier this month (March) met with little opposition to the three-phase project that will cost more than \$580,000 and take two years to complete. The town will chip in about 15 per cent of the total of the project that should begin in the next month.



Georgetown, PEI. (Photo: The Guardian)

U.S. Water Prize

The City of Los Angeles, the Milwaukee Water Council, the National Great Rivers Research & Education Center, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection and the Pacific Institute are

the winners of the 2011 U.S. Water Prize.

The winners were recognized by the Clean Water America Alliance for their watershed models and programs that enhanced great water sustainability in the United States.

Airport sewage upgrade to get environmental assessment

■ BY PAUL HUTCHINGS
THE WESTERN STAR

(Deer Lake, NL)—An environmental assessment order has been issued for the Deer Lake Regional Airport's next expansion project.

The provincial (Newfoundland & Labrador) government will assess the airport's sewage system upgrade, which is scheduled to begin this spring. The extension

will accommodate projected wastewater flows as the airport continues expanding in the coming years.

The project consists of the existing sewage treatment systems to the northwest of the airport parking lot being replaced with a newly engineered Abydoz sewage treatment system.

The new system will include a 620-square-metre engineered wetland, as well as 534 metres of sanitary sewer line, a 40-cubic-metre septic tank and a minor upgrade to an exist-

ing 520-m access road.

The sewer system is one of the first in a series of improvements for the airport in the coming year. Recently board members held their annual general meeting during which they told stakeholders that the facility earned a total revenue last year of almost \$3 million with the total number of passengers up to almost 270,000, up from the previous year.

Airport CEO Jamie Schwartz said the airport has the second highest level of passenger traffic in the province, behind St. John's, and

more projects are on the way, including a possible extension to the parking lot.

Airport chairman Todd Lee said the facility has reached a level of success he wouldn't have believed.

"When I joined the board I didn't foresee us extending the runway or the building because at the time passenger traffic was just starting to grow," he said "But as it grew it changed the oversight and each step has brought us new revisions so I'm very happy about that."



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Carpenter named 2011 Stockholm Water Prize Laureate

H.M. King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden will present the Stockholm Water Prize to Stephen R. Carpenter at a royal award ceremony during World Water Week on Aug. 25 in Stockholm.

The Professor of Zoology and Limnology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, US was honoured for his groundbreaking research has shown how lake ecosystems are affected by the surrounding landscape and by human activities.

Professor Carpenter is recognized as one of the world's most influential environmental scientists in the field of ecology. By combining theoretical models and large-scale lake experiments he has reframed the understanding of freshwater environments and how humans and the surrounding landscape impact lake ecosystems.

The Stockholm Water Prize Nominating Committee emphasized the importance of Professor Carpenter's contributions in helping us understand how we affect lakes through nutrient loading, fishing, and the introduction of exotic species.

"Professor Carpenter has shown outstanding leadership in setting the ecological research agenda, integrating it into a socio-ecological context, and in providing guidance for the management of aquatic resources," noted the Committee.

Professor Carpenter is best known for his research on tropic cascades in lakes – a concept that describes how impacts on any species in an ecosystem will cascade down, or up, the food chain. Known amongst his peers in the scientific community for his creativity and enthusiasm, Profes-

or Carpenter's work combines different scientific disciplines and approaches. By seeking collaboration outside of academia, he has managed to link research to both policy and practice.

On receiving the news, Professor Carpenter said, "I am thrilled. Many great people have received the prize over the years, and there are many others whose work is worth rewarding. It is a great honour to be selected. The prize will increase my resolve and sense of obligation to work on emerging issues of freshwater, such as climate change and the connections of food and water security."

The Stockholm Water Prize Laureate receives \$150,000 (US) and a crystal sculpture specially designed by Orrefors.



Professor Stephen Carpenter

Father of BNR receives water prize

Dr. James Barnard, a biological nutrient removal (BNR) expert, will receive the 2011 Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize.

The Father of BNR, Dr. Barnard uses natural microorganisms as a wastewater treatment process to remove phosphorous and nitrogen from rivers and lakes.

If accumulated, phosphorous and nitrogen can create algae that harms the ecological system and lowers the water quality in water sources.

Dr. Barnard's technique does not use chemicals and the treated water can be returned to the source with minimal environmental impact.

The Black & Veatch engineer developed BNR in the 1970s in South Africa when the country's water quality was challenged.

Mr Tan Gee Paw, who chairs the nominating commit-

tee for the Lee Kuan Yew Water Prize, said: "His relentless pursuit of adaptable solutions to resolve the challenge of water reclamation has led to a highly sustainable technology that protects the quality of precious water resources and the environment, and delivers immense benefit to mankind. Bridging the gap between research and industrial application, his technology now forms the basis of all BNR processes in use today in both developed and developing countries."

The prize, that includes \$300,000, will be presented in July during the Singapore International Water Week.

The *Kansas City Star* reported that Dr. Barnard plans to donate some of the cash award to Engineers Without Borders and to educational programs in South Africa.

OU International Water Prize

Ben Fawcett will receive the OU International Water Prize. The biennial award sponsored by the University of Oklahoma's WATER Center recognizes an individual who's made significant contributions in water and sanitation especially in remote sections of developing countries.

Fawcett, an environmental health engineer, is the author of *The Last Taboo: Opening the Door on the Global Sanitation Crisis*.

In his book the University of Queensland professor pointed out the lack of bathrooms in developing countries—a problem the World Health Organization says affects 2.4 billion people.

Fawcett who works with Engineers Without Borders, has also helped agencies—the Red Cross, Oxfam, Save the Children and Water Aid—in developing relief programs related to water and sanitation. He campaigns for toilets to fix sanitation problems and improve water supplies in poorer nations.

Fawcett will deliver the plenary lecture during the Oklahoma WATER Conference Oct. 24-25.

The \$25,000 OU International Water Prize is divided evenly between the recipient and the WATER-related non-profit organization he chooses.

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Water woes and more in Cupids

■ BY BURTON JANES
THE COMPASS

After basking in the national spotlight for a full year in 2010, the Town of Cupids (Newfoundland & Labrador) is now facing a harsh reality as concerns about water quality come to the surface and the town hall is abandoned because of issues with air quality and the overall condition of the structure.

Mayor Ron Laracy is sounding the alarm about the quality of the water being supplied to the roughly 800 residents, and is calling on the provincial government to take action before someone gets sick, or worse.

Residents have continually expressed frustration about the brown discoloration of the water, and Laracy worries the problem may stem from farming operations in the area. He has no solid proof, but wonders if chicken waste being dumped in the area is contaminating the water.

"They're dumping more and more manure all the time," Laracy told *The Compass* during a recent (March) interview. He added there are a growing number of complaints about the odour coming from the farms.

Laracy even drew parallels to the 2000 tragedy in Walkerton, Ontario, where the water supply was contaminated by a highly dangerous strain of E.coli bacteria from farm run-off, resulting in the death of at least seven people. Some 2,500 others became ill.

Laracy works as a water and wastewater treatment specialist with the nearby Town of Clarke's Beach.

"As Newfoundlanders, we all know that if you dump manure on the hill, it all comes to the salt water," Laracy stated.

The town's water comes from Brigus Long Pond, and Laracy is concerned that run-off from the chicken waste is getting into the supply.

He said the seriousness of this issue has increased in the last year because of a worrisome change in the results of tests done on the water.

"Let's say we're supposed to have a 20 count. Well, we're up to a 30 count," Laracy explained.

At the same time, he points out the amount of chlorine added to the water supply remains below government-imposed limits.

Meanwhile, the mayor is cautioning against

jumping to conclusions. "We can't say for sure (the problem) is caused by the manure, but all indications are it could be that."

Council has not met with any of the farmers. Laracy believes it shouldn't have to.

"It's a (provincial) government issue, and they have more knowledge than we do about this," Laracy said.

The mayor did not advise against drinking the water, and there is no boil order in effect.

He also acknowledged other factors may be contributing to concerns about water quality. He said, "a lot of debris is getting washed down off the banks into our water supply."

He suggested that perhaps an improved filtering system could be put in place.

The water supply is operated and maintained by the neighbouring Town of Brigus. The Town of South River is also supplied by Brigus Long Pond.

Laracy said Cupids is the only town that has expressed any concern to the government.

"It's a precaution we're taking ourselves," he said, adding that, at some point, the matter will be brought to the other two councils.

Laracy said a government representative is scheduled to visit in the future to test the water, and to check the distance from the water supply to the nearest location where chicken waste is being dumped.

"There's no good talking about it and, a year later, something happens and we say, 'we knew about this, but we didn't say anything,'" Laracy said.

TOWN HALL ABANDONED

In another development, the town hall has been abandoned and the administrative affairs of the town have been relocated to the community centre.

Laracy said the building was damaged by Hurricane Igor last fall, and also sustained damage during tropical storm Chantal in 2007. The basement flooded and the well overflowed, resulting in serious damage, he said.

Occupational health and safety officials have cautioned against using the basement, and council recently decided to vacate the building altogether.

"We have a massive amount of mildew and condensation, and we're starting to get mold,"



The town hall in Cupids, Newfoundland & Labrador has been abandoned. The town's administrative affairs are now being conducted at the community centre. (Photo: Burton Janes/*The Compass*)

Laracy said. "It's unhealthy to be in the building."

There are several other drawbacks to the building, which was erected in 1964. It has no wheelchair ramp, the siding is antiquated, and it's too small to accommodate the town's needs.

"We know we aren't going back in that building, and the community centre will be used as long as necessary," Laracy said.

The town hall could be repaired, but Laracy said that would be a waste of money. Council has already filed an application with government for a new building, Laracy said.

"You have to work with the government at all times to get everything in your community to work," he said. "You also have to let your people know what's going on. If they see you're doing something, they're behind you. I think they are well behind our council."

SIGNIFICANT CELEBRATION

Cupids is still basking in the reflected glory of the year-long celebrations marking the 400th anniversary of the birthplace of English Canada.

Approximately 40,000 visitors converged on the town in 2010. Infrastructure money of \$1,500,000 financed water-and-sewer upgrades, Pointe Beach/Saltwater Pond improvements, and a three-flags viewing platform.

And the world-class Cupids Legacy Centre is an icon tourist attraction which will keep alive the Cupids experience for years to come.

Despite the challenges with the town water and town hall, Laracy remains confident about the future of his town.

"It's going to grow more than we figure it's going to grow," he said.

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The Debert Water Tower. (Photo: Heather Jones)

Sinkhole will be remedied when drier weather hits

■ THE NEW GLASGOW DAILY NEWS

[Stellarton, NS]—The sinkhole located at the cenotaph in Stellarton (Nova Scotia) will be fixed this summer says town engineer Tony Addis.

He said the town is waiting for the ground to be sufficiently hardened to get trucks in the area to fix the spot.

“We filled it in (with rock) and put some dirt over the rock,” said Addis. “We’re waiting for dry weather in June or July when we can get back into the area without harming the surrounding area.”

He said the sinkhole appeared in December last year and that it was caused by the collapse of underground mine workings.

“Our standard procedure for sinkholes and we’ve had a number of them in town, is basically we fill them up with big rocks until it is stabilized and then we dress up the surface afterwards.”

Currently the sinkhole is blocked off with fencing and will remain there until it is fixed.

Addis declined to comment on the potential cost of the repair and calls made to the town clerk were not returned Thursday afternoon (March 17).

Controversy continues in Debert

Continued from page 3

Self, however, said he was never notified of the change and that he and the county have never come to terms for a final agreement on the use of the well.

“He knows better, municipal council knows better. They have good counsel (legal) and yeah, there’s a history here,” Self said of Taylor and council.

“And I have constantly put my best foot forward. It’s the idea that he represents, that there’s an agreement that we should sign, is absurd, because there’s nothing that we have agreed on. There’s an agreement in draft. I’m not going to sign it...”

“Not true,” Taylor said, of Self’s take on the situation, adding that county staff have attempted to “negotiate in good faith and apparently he doesn’t feel that way.”

If Self is interested in finalizing the water agree-

ment, “all he has to do is come in, in good faith, and talk with our CAO,” Taylor said. “We’re not having any problem with anybody else in this respect out there. I think our record speaks for itself,” he said, adding he did not wish to add further comment.

Self, however, maintains he has created a viable, tax-paying business where none previously existed and he believes the county is not giving him the due he deserves.

“What I wish to know is, why as a ratepayer, as someone who in fact has met all of his obligations ... and to be treated as if I’ve done something wrong, you know, as if I’m on trial, in fact is precisely the opposite of how the elected municipality of Colchester County should be comporting itself ...,” he said.

“And I’m not amused and I’m not pleased about it.”

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World Water Day Conference

Urban water challenges was the focus of the World Water Day Conference in Cape Town, South Africa in March.

The issues facing cities—where two-thirds of the world's population will live in 20 years time—is huge.

Numerous conference speakers told the 1000 delegates, who represented over 30 global organizations, that status quo water management models had to be changed.

According to the United Nations, over the past 10 years, the number of urban dwellers who have no access to tap water in their homes has risen by approximately 114 million. The number of those who have no access to the most basic sanitation facilities has risen by 134 million.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said, "Water challenges go beyond questions of access. In many countries, girls are forced to drop out of school owing to a lack of sanitation facilities, and women are harassed or assaulted when carrying water or visiting a public toilet. Moreover, the poorest and most vulnerable members of society often have little choice but to buy water from informal vendors at prices estimated to be 20 to 100 per cent higher than that of their richer neighbours, who receive piped city water in their homes. This is not just unsustainable; it is unacceptable."

The need for communication, collaboration and visionary leadership were recurring themes in the African Ministers' Council on Water's presentations about water services, the guardian.co.uk reported.

The concept of franchising wastewater treatment plants—a type of water supply privatiza-

tion that it said had been very controversial at past conferences—was "given a cautious welcome."

Supporters said it involved "providing a standardized model that breaks down the business processes into a set of clearly defined issues could extend the reach of the limited number of engineers and scientists in developing countries and also would more easily secure financial backing."

But not everyone advocated the idea.

The guardian.co.uk quoted a delegate representing Coca-Cola who said, "When you talk about franchising you're talking about investments. Investment fears uncertainty. When you talk about water as a human right, investors get nervous. The franchise model has been successful in delivering everything from burgers to Coke, but it requires a level of certainty to work."

Most speakers were optimistic that some of the water problems facing the world's cities would be solved with technological advances.

Prince Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands, who represented the UN Secretary General's Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation, urged on Ban Ki-moon's behalf that governments "recognize the urban water crisis for what it is – a crisis of governance, weak policies and poor management, rather than one of scarcity."

The guardian.co.uk quoted Alioune Badiane, the regional director for Africa and the Arab States at UN-Habitat, who said, "Water does not require just one capacity. Water engineers, chemical engineers, planners, architects, in addition to advocacy, ambassadors, and politicians—we need all of them. You cannot fix water with a single



On March 21 and 22, Prince Willem-Alexander of the Netherlands was in Cape Town, South Africa joining the celebration of World Water Day 2011. There, the Prince of Orange was present at several events like the final of the 'Moola for Amanzi', where five teams of talented young professionals and students presented business concepts to a panel of water experts to demonstrate their innovative solutions for water related problems. (Photo: Het Koninklijk Huis/Dutch Royal House)

shot. It's a very complex sector that requires a lot of interdependency."

Julia Bucknall, sector manager of the central unit for water at the World Bank's Energy, Transport and Water Department, said, "The centrality of water to development is becoming more and more obvious, and this conference shows it.

Water supply and sanitation are extremely important, but water is also important for energy security, food security and basic urban security. So we're seeing this integrated view of water as a central core development issue emerging more and more."



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