

# Sewage Treatment Plant Upgrades

Newsletter #3  
November 2019

Welcome to the third issue of the Comox Valley Regional District's newsletter providing updates on the Comox Valley Water Pollution Control Centre's (sewage treatment plant) upgrade construction and ongoing management. For more information visit: [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/upgrades](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/upgrades)

## Odour Study Shows Improvements – Next Steps to Be Reviewed

An odour dispersion study completed over this summer and fall around the Comox Valley's sewage treatment plant has shown an 80 per cent reduction in odour since before a series of upgrades were undertaken in 2017 and 2018.

While that's positive news for residents in the area – the CVRD must now decide whether further improvements are warranted to decrease the facility's impact on neighbours.

In 2016, an odour dispersion modelling study conducted on the Brent Road facility concluded that the facility's smell could be reduced by 80 per cent with upgrades to the existing scrubber and covering primary clarifiers. These improvements, and the installation of an activated carbon polisher, are now complete.

The Curtis Road Residents Association have advocated for a 1 OU (odour unit) limit for the facility, which would require covering the bioreactor at a cost of \$8.5 million. While the 2019 review shows odours are significantly reduced, during certain times odour exceeds 5 OUs at the property line and at one home on Curtis Road adjacent to the facility. These results were presented to the CVRD's Sewage Commission on Nov. 5.

Staff are now reviewing options for further steps with the facility, including more research into how other jurisdictions are managing odour at their wastewater treatment plants and what standards have been set in other parts of British Columbia.

The results of that research work will be presented back to the Sewage Commission in early 2020. The commission can then consider what further actions could be taken.

Watch for updates at [www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/sewagetreatment](http://www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/sewagetreatment)



Installation of new EQ basin is nearing completion.

## EQ Basin Construction Update

Work on the Equalization Basin (EQ basin), under construction since July, is nearing completion. Crews have completed the excavation and underground monitor installation. The liner is now in place as well, and the project team is working on finishing electrical and mechanical work and the final site works – grading, gravel, fencing and cleanup. The project is on track to be completed for this winter's storm season, as anticipated.

The EQ basin will provide a critical safeguard to the operations of the sewage treatment plant by temporarily storing wastewater when high inflows – from winter storms and high tides – threaten to overload the facility's capacity. Once complete, it's estimated that it'll be in use under 50 hours/year, at the wettest, stormiest times of the year. It will be washed out after each use to minimize odour impacts.



## Policy for Area B Rep. Approved

At its November meeting, the CVRD's Sewage Commission adopted a policy that will see Electoral Area B representation at their commission table during discussions about infrastructure in the rural area.

Previously there has been no formal policy outlining a role for the electoral area director, who isn't a member of the commission, because residents of the area are not participants in the CVRD's wastewater service. Electoral Area B Director, Arzeena Hamir, has been invited to the table in the past to share information about the concerns or questions of her constituents.

This month, commission members agreed they would like to formalize the opportunity for communication with the director who represents the area where some of the wastewater infrastructure is located. For discussions about the wastewater treatment plant, for example, there's agreement that having the director's voice at the table would help commission members make good decisions for the long-term health of the system and community.

The policy does not give the director voting rights and the seat does not count towards quorum, as voting will remain with the City of Courtenay, Town of Comox and Department of National Defence.

## Sign Up for Phone or Text Notifications

The CVRD has added a sewage treatment plant notification option through the regional district's text and/or voicemail notification system (ConnectRocket). Residents can sign up to receive urgent or short notice updates. The facility team will send out a notice if there is planned maintenance that may result in noise or odour impacts, or if an unplanned operational issue causes increased impact that will be prolonged (more than 1 day).

To sign up, visit: [comoxvalleyrd.ca/notifications](https://comoxvalleyrd.ca/notifications)

## Questions? Drop-in to Chat

Want to talk to someone in person about something you've read here? Or – want to see the wastewater treatment plant for yourself?

Drop by our November 'on-site' office hours at the facility (445 Brent Road) to chat with Kris La Rose, Senior Manager of Water and Wastewater Services and Mike Imrie, Manager of Wastewater Services.

### Drop-In Office Hours:

**Wednesday, Nov. 20**

**3:00 pm to 5:00 pm**

**445 Brent Road, Comox**



## Questions/Concerns?

### Contact Us:

**Phone:** Business hours/non urgent: **250-334-6056**, after hours/emergency: **1-888-777-5985**

**Email:** [engineering@comoxvalleyrd.ca](mailto:engineering@comoxvalleyrd.ca)

**Online:** [comoxvalleyrd.ca/upgrades](https://comoxvalleyrd.ca/upgrades)



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