

Sewage Treatment Plant Upgrades

Newsletter #4
February 2020

Welcome to the fourth issue of the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD)'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

Next Steps on Odour Control Moving Ahead: Upgrades to Begin this Summer

Sewage commission will invest \$7 million to reduce odour from the sewage treatment plant – addressing neighbours concerns and implementing requested improvements.

At their February meeting, the Comox Valley Sewage Commission approved another round of facility improvements, after receiving further analysis of odour at the sewage treatment plant and research into odour standards at other plants around the province.

The analysis showed that existing odours remain quite high in some areas around the property and that odours will continue to increase with the sewer service area's population. To reduce odour now and into the future, the CVRD will proceed with upgrade work starting this summer. Work will include:

- Full covering of the bioreactors
- Installation of a new, larger wet chemical scrubber

Odour dispersion modelling shows these upgrades will bring odours down to a minimally detectable level for residents living near the treatment plant.

The work will be complete by Spring 2021, followed by a summer period of odour sampling. CVRD staff are now considering short-term measures for odour control through the summer 2020 upgrade work.

Along with the equipment upgrades, the commission also agreed to an odour standard for the facility, committing to:

- A 5 OU (odour unit) upper 'design' limit at the treatment plant property line, to be met once upgrades are completed;
- and a lower 'operating' limit, to be met during regular operation when all systems at the plant are working at an optimal level.

This operational limit will be set once new infrastructure is installed and the performance of the upgraded facility has been confirmed.

To stay informed on the upgrade work, watch for updates at www.comoxvalleyrd.ca/sewagetreatment

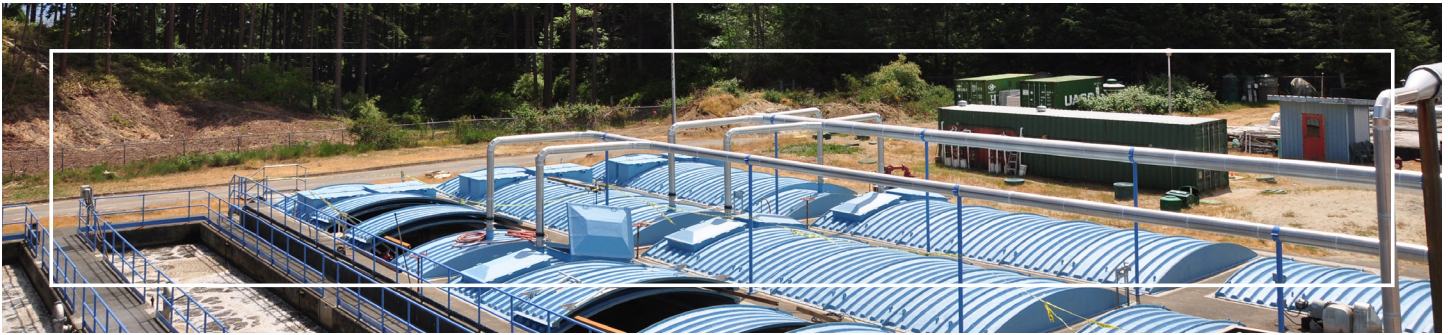


The bioreactors will be fully covered next year.

Odour Control Timeline

The CVRD has taken a number of steps in past years to reduce odour and address neighbour concerns at the Brent Road facility:

- **1990s:** \$7 million invested in a new wet chemical scrubber, covering of grit removal tanks, and the removal of biosolids to the landfill.
- **2013:** Sewage commission directed staff to undertake further study work and recommend additional mitigation measures for persistent odours.
- **2018:** \$2 million invested to cover the primary clarifiers and install an activated carbon polisher.
- **2019:** Additional modelling and analysis was completed, following continued complaints from neighbours.
- **2020:** Sewage commission approves covering of bioreactors and installation of new scrubber.



Commissioning of New EQ Basin to Start This Month

Work on the Equalization Basin (EQ Basin) is nearly complete, with commissioning of the new system planned for later this month. Crews are wrapping up final steps of construction, including installation of the slide gate actuators and system testing.

The project team is expecting to come in well under budget on this project, due to lower-than-expected estimates and the work proceeding smoothly over past months.

Once in operation, the basin will be available to temporarily store wastewater when inflows from stormwater are so high that the treatment plant can hardly keep up. The new basin will also help maximize the lifespan of the outfall at the plant, which is a significant capital cost and is expected to need replacement in the 2030s.

With construction of the EQ basin complete, the team will continue upgrade work on related infrastructure, which involves replacing process piping in the basement of the plant. This final work is planned to be complete by Spring 2020.



New EQ basin undergoing testing.

Questions/Concerns?

Contact Us:

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

Email: engineeringervices@comoxvalleyrd.ca

Online: comoxvalleyrd.ca/upgrades

Open House Coming This Spring

Interested in learning more about upgrades happening at the facility? Want to find out about operations and ask questions to the staff?

We're planning a public open house in late spring, where you can visit the treatment plant and get to know about plans for its future. Watch for details on the CVRD website, social media, or in your mailbox coming soon.



Visit us at the open house this spring to learn more about future upgrades to the facility.

Sign Up for Phone/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 on planned maintenance that may result in noise or odour impacts, or unplanned operational issues that cause prolonged impact (more than 1 day).

To sign up, visit: comoxvalleyrd.ca/notifications



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