



Equalization Basin Construction

Frequently Asked Questions

Improving the facilities at the Comox Valley Water Pollution Control Centre (sewage treatment plant) has been a key focus for the Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD)'s engineering team over the past few years. In 2019/2020, an equalization basin was constructed on the site to help manage peak wet weather flows.

What is an equalization (EQ) basin and why was it built?

An EQ basin is an open tank that holds excess wastewater until the treatment plant is able to process it.

Of the roughly 8,760 hours in every year, there are around 50 that pose a real threat to the successful operations of the sewage treatment plant. Those are the hours when the rainiest, stormiest days and nights of the winter coincide with the highest tides of the year and the treatment plant can hardly keep up. During these few days a year, this basin will hold excess wastewater to ensure it is treated properly before being discharged by outfall into the ocean.

The new basin will also help maximize the lifespan of the outfall, which is a significant capital cost and is expected to need replacement in the 2030s.

What's the location of the EQ basin and how was it determined?

The EQ basin is located on the southeast corner of the treatment plant property. Through design assessment and evaluation of options, this location was chosen because it is in a place that does not limit future expansion, and will require the least operational cost/effort.

Questions/Concerns? Contact Us:

Phone: [250-334-6000](tel:250-334-6000)

Email: engineeringervices@comoxvalleyrd.ca

Online: comoxvalleyrd.ca/upgrades

How will groundwater be protected at the site?

The EQ basin is double lined, with two geosynthetic liners layered on top of each other, and includes a monitoring system to assess for any changes in water levels and allow for regular testing of groundwater quality. Regular maintenance of vegetation around the basin will prevent trees and harmful debris from falling into it.

Will the EQ basin increase odours in the area?

There will be minimal to no odour impacts from the EQ basin. This is because the EQ basin's use, while critical, will be limited. The basin will only be used in the winter storm months and will not coincide with hot weather, open windows or frequent outdoor activity. Further, the basin will be cleaned after each use, preventing any residual odour.

In addition, the CVRD identified an opportunity to move soil excavated from the basin to fill in gullies on the property's edge. This area has been identified as an odour corridor by community members, and the new berm is intended to minimize impact by blocking odours.