

# Dewatering Process Cuts Monthly Cost by \$20,000

By Maurice Rees

Handling municipal wastewater is a complicated and expensive proposition. Years ago it was simply install the sewer mains, connect properties to the sewer lines then dump it in the river, lake, harbour or ocean. Then as concerns were raised about the environment, governments passed legislation to clean up the mess.

The purpose of this article is to explain why since 2012, \$13.8-Million has been spent at the wastewater treatment facility in Lower Truro, and to give an insight into what is happening elsewhere to have non-potable or potable water in areas that have face drastic drought conditions for several years.

Traditionally in Canada we don't view water as an important commodity, but this past summer, those on Nova Scotia's South Shore faced a shortage of water with wells running dry and staying dry for over 10 weeks. Rainfall in October and the tail-end of Hurricane Matthew has provided some relief, but that area of the province needs a lot more rainfall before the

ground freezes.

Although we complain about the high cost of treating raw sewage to the point it meets government regulations for disposal into our rivers or ocean, we have never faced water shortages such as they have been facing in California for the past four years. It's estimated that in the USA over 5.8-billion gallons of water are used each day just to flush toilets.

As a fourth year of drought continues to drain aquifers and reservoirs, California water managers and environmentalists are urging adoption of a polarizing water recycling policy known as direct potable reuse. Even though there is a serious "yuck" factor a lot of money is being spend to research to turn wastewater or sewer fluids onto potable (drinking) water. In many parts of the USA treated sewage has been used in the non-potable state to irrigate crops, parks or golf courses. Some of the produce we purchase here locally may have been imported from areas in California, where treated municipal wastewater may have been used for crop irrigation.

I've pointed out a small portion of the data and some of the research in the USA and other drought stricken countries as they try to cope with less and less water in their aquifers and reservoirs. For whatever reason the aquifers on the south shore were lowered enough that wells went dry.

All this preamble got started when Michelle Newell, Director of Public Works, Municipality of County of Colchester showed council a video showing various processes and updates at the Central Colchester Wastewater Treatment Facility in Lower Truro. A portion of the upgrades undertaken at the facility since 2012 included a new dewatering process to eliminate extensive odour problems which caused many residents to complain not only in Lower Truro, but across the river throughout the Onslows and downtown Truro.

**We have posted the video on Facebook. It can be viewed at: <https://www.facebook.com/theshorelinejournal/>**

To get a better understanding of the facts behind the video, Michelle Newell was contacted and provided the following: In 2012, we completed a \$12M project at the Central Colchester Wastewater Treatment Facility (lower Truro) to install the bar screen, the UV disinfection system, an extra sequencing batch tank (for 3 in total) as well as an underground equalization tank under the parking lot.

She went on to explain, that as a result of complaints about odours in 2014 & 2015, she and her staff embarked

upon a modernization program to solve the problem. CBCL, Halifax was engaged to design and supervise installation of the new equipment.

It was a \$1.8M project to replace the old belt presses with two new centrifuges for the dewatering of sludge. The project was completed earlier this year. This change in the sludge dewatering process is what has resulted in the reduction in odours.

In previous years, sludge had been shipped to Fundy Compost in Pleasant Valley, near Brookfield, at a cost of approximately \$40,000 per month. About the same time as the dewatering centrifuges were being discussed Fundy Compost advised the municipality it would not be able to continue handling the sludge.

The dewatered sludge/biosolids is now shipped to Kempton for handling at the Materials Recycling Facility (MRF). This change has cut disposal fees in half. There is still a cost to shipping and processing of the material in Kempton, but the monthly costs have gone down from about \$40,000 to about \$20,000.

Don't worry that the municipality is considering turning sewage fluids into non-potable water for irrigation purposes, or process further that we could have it streaming out our kitchen taps. Just wanted to explain why we should not complain about the high costs of treating raw sewage.

**To see how and why \$13.8-Million of taxpayers dollars were spent visit our Facebook page at: <https://www.facebook.com/theshorelinejournal/>**



Nova Scotia Music Week first appeared in Truro in 2014 and returned this year with even greater participation by the local business community. The NSMW host committee, made up of eight volunteers who worked with the organizers from Music Nova Scotia in Halifax to help coordinate this four-day music festival and conference. Craig Johnson was chair in both 2014 and 2016. The NSMW host committee members included: Craig Johnson, Sam Madore, Miriah Kearney, Angela Dwyer-James, Melanie Grant, Jennifer Johnson, Raissa Tetanish, and Nick Sharpe. (Submitted)

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## My Favourite Pet

Tasha McNutt, member of the Clifton 4-H Club, took this photo of Dory, the family pet. Dory loves to sleep in the bathroom sink and drink water from the tap.



For her photography efforts, Tasha and Dory will receive a \$20.00 Gift Certificate from The Shoreline Journal and Clarence Farm Services.

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Great Village Legion Branch # 72 Treasurer Fred Richard and President Logan Spencer make the draw for \$2000 Sobey's Gift Cards or \$1500 cash. Over \$4400 was realized from the raffle, with proceeds going to the Legion Building Fund. The lucky winner was Rob Hudson. (Harrington Photo)



Fire Chief Kevin Sprague, former District 6 Councillor Bill Baker, Deputy Fire Chief Todd Seymour, and Assistant Deputy Chief Norman Gower were featured at the head table during the 42nd annual banquet of the Wentworth Fire Department catered by the Wentworth United Church Women. (Hope Bridgewater Photo)

**At Masstown Market, every holiday event is a one stop shopping experience ... and Christmas is one of our favourite Holidays!**

Our Christmas Centre is open now until Dec. 31<sup>st</sup>

Join us for "Songs of the Season" with piano entertainer Harry Bentham on December 4<sup>th</sup> from 1- 3PM.

Complimentary photos with Santa at Masstown Market on Sunday, Dec. 11<sup>th</sup> from 1 to 3 PM.

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