

Construction of the Greater Nanaimo Pollution Control Centre Secondary Treatment Upgrade Project is Complete

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) is pleased to announce the Greater Nanaimo Pollution Control Centre (GNPCC) Secondary Treatment Upgrade Project is complete. The \$82 million upgrade is the largest capital expenditure in the RDN's history. The project adds secondary treatment to the wastewater treatment process at the facility and increases capacity for our growing communities. The project was funded in part by a \$6 million contribution from the federal Gas Tax Fund which is administered by the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) in partnership with the Province of British Columbia.

The GNPCC is the largest of four wastewater treatment facilities owned and operated by the RDN and currently serves 100,000 residents and businesses in the City of Nanaimo, District of Lantzville and on Snuneymuxw First Nation land. The facility also treats septage from residential onsite septic systems and wastewater from pump-and-haul properties.

The GNPCC was built in the early 1970's with primary treatment which uses gravity and time to remove approximately 50 per cent of solids from the wastewater. The secondary treatment infrastructure was built from 2017 to 2020 and uses beneficial organisms which feed on organic matter left after primary treatment. Primary and secondary treatment combined remove more than 90 per cent of the solids from the wastewater before treated effluent is discharged to the ocean.

The RDN uses the solids and biogas produced during primary and secondary treatment to improve local environments and supplement plant operations. Solids that are extracted during the treatment process are treated further and used to enrich forest soils and reclaim industrial sites. Biogas produced during this process is used to heat the plant. In addition, odours captured around the plant are removed by the new biofilter and carbon filters, improving air quality for neighbouring residents.

In addition to the federal Gas Tax Fund contribution, the project was also funded by reserves, development cost charges and borrowed funds. To learn more about the GNPCC and wastewater treatment in the RDN and to view photos and a video of the project, visit: rdn.bc.ca/greater-nanaimo-pollution-control-centre and getinvolved.rdn.ca/gnpcc-upgrade. For more information on federal infrastructure funding, visit: www.infrastructure.gc.ca.

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Quotes

“Modern and efficient wastewater treatment protects the health of Canadians and the environment,” said Patrick Weiler, Member of Parliament for West Vancouver–Sunshine Coast–Sea to Sky Country, on behalf of the Honourable Catherine McKenna, Minister of Infrastructure and Communities. “This important upgrade will support a growing population here in Nanaimo and also benefit the environment as the byproducts created will be used to fertilize land and heat the plant. Canada’s infrastructure plan invests in thousands of projects, creates jobs across the country, and builds cleaner, more inclusive communities.”

“I am pleased to celebrate the completion of this important project for the Nanaimo region. These modernization upgrades to the wastewater treatment facility will increase capacity for a growing community well into the future. But more than that, they significantly lower the impact of pollution for nearby ocean waters and contribute to improving the local environment,” said, Shelia Malcolmson, MLA for Nanaimo on behalf of Minister of Municipal Affairs, Josie Osborne. “We are proud to partner with Canada and the Union of British Columbia Municipalities to invest in infrastructure projects like this that make life better for people and the environment.”

“The project is a significant contribution to our Environmental Stewardship Strategy as over 99 per cent of the wastewater treated by the RDN now receives secondary treatment,” said Chair Tyler Brown. “The RDN is 10 years ahead of the schedule required by federal regulations for wastewater treatment and we appreciate the federal funding that helped make this important project for our region possible.”

“With over 10 billion litres of wastewater treated annually at the GNPCC, the completion of this project will help the RDN achieve a number of objectives under the Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP),” said Director Don Bonner, Liquid Waste Management Plan Monitoring Committee Chair. “As a component of the LWMP, the project also supports the RDN’s vision of an environmentally, socially, and economically healthy region; resilient and adaptable to change.”

“This project is real milestone for the Greater Nanaimo region and prepares the way for continued growth and development in accordance with high standards for treatment,” said Councillor Brian Frenkel, UBCM President. “I am very pleased the federal Gas Tax Fund is supporting this critical project.”

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