

Wastewater is a Federal Election Issue

The municipal sector in Newfoundland and Labrador wants to do the right thing to manage wastewater. They require time. They require investment. Together, we need to make a plan on how to achieve these policy goals.

Without resources, time and a long-term plan, the policy goals set out in the Wastewater System Effluent Regulations (WSER) cannot be met. These regulations are part of a Canada-wide strategy for managing wastewater effluent. Under this framework, all municipalities are responsible for registering and monitoring their wastewater outfalls. Municipalities recording wastewater flows of 100m³/day (100,000L/day) or more are subject to additional requirements under the regulations.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, 197 outfalls exceed these outfall limits and require system upgrades. This impacts 115 municipalities. Municipalities exceeding these regulatory limits had the option to apply for transitional authorization as part of the regulations' phased in approach.

Reopen the Window for Transitional Authorization (TA)

- The vast majority of Newfoundland and Labrador's 276 municipalities currently have no wastewater treatment facilities;
- Communities and contractors alike in Newfoundland and Labrador will need more time to design, finance and construct the extensive new public infrastructure needed to meet the requirements of the Wastewater System Effluent Regulations;
- The application window for the Transitional Authorizations meant to provide for a phased implementation of these developments through 2040 closed in 2014 with just three municipalities in the Province having successfully applied; and,
- Municipalities required to implement wastewater treatment systems under the Regulations but that lack Transitional Authorizations are currently operating in violation of the law and are being subjected to escalating enforcement activities;
- Municipalities need time to plan their work and money to work their plan. To achieve this goal the first step is revising of the Wastewater System Effluent Regulations to extend the period of eligibility for applications to obtain Transitional Authorizations.

Question for the candidate.

Do you support reopening of the transitional authorization window under the Wastewater System Effluent Regulations (WSER)?

Permanent Doubling of Municipal Gas Tax Revenues

- Municipalities rely on their annual Gas Tax revenues to fund public infrastructure development.
- Municipalities manage some 60 percent of the public infrastructure that drives our economy and quality of life. Local governments make people’s lives better, and local solutions have significant regional, provincial and national impact.
- Municipalities are constantly doing more with less. Unsustainable fiscal tools make it hard to plan for the longer term. Receiving only 10 cents on every tax dollar, local governments face huge challenges in maintaining current infrastructure—and this is not to mention growing needs.
- A permanent doubling of the Gas Tax Fund transfer to municipalities for infrastructure renewal—with a predictable annual growth rate that better reflects Canada’s long-term economic growth – is necessary.
- Meeting the local infrastructure requirements of the Wastewater System Effluent Regulations cannot be done through existing funding sources. Funding available under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program’s Green Infrastructure stream totals 302.4 million over 10 years in our province. This is already earmarked for other municipal infrastructure needs. It is not enough to address needs under the wastewater requirements.

Question for the candidate.
Do you support a permanent doubling of the Gas Tax contributions to municipalities?

Social Media

Hashtags:			
#GasTaxFund	#cdnmuni	#cdnpoli	
#Election2019	#nlmuni	#elxn43	
Tags/Handles			
@FCM_online	@AndrewScheer	@theJagmeetSingh	@ElizabethMay
@JustinTrudeau	@wall_joedy	@JackHarrisNDP	@tonyrkeats
@SeamusORegan	@JoshEisses		
@ChurenceRogers	@Larry4Labrador		
@NickWhalenMP			
@Gudie			
@McDonald4Avalon			
@YvonneJJones			
@Scott_Simms			

As municipalities look for new fiscal tools to build better lives, the Gas Tax Fund provides a shining example of what could be possible with direct, reliable infrastructure funding.

In Election 2019, FCM calls on all parties to commit to:

A permanent doubling of the Gas Tax Fund transfer to municipalities for infrastructure renewal—with a predictable annual growth rate that better reflects Canada’s long-term economic growth.

Tweet your MP and federal election candidates with the hashtags #GasTaxFund and #cdnmuni to tell them (and your followers) how the Gas Tax fund is building your community.

Town councillors in the very smallest communities or the big cities have the same issue: municipalities need better and more reliable fiscal tools in order to tackle the daily challenges that build better lives.

CANDIDATES IN Newfoundland and Labrador (as declared by 09/12/19)				
LEADERS	Justin Trudeau	Andrew Scheer	Jagmeet Singh	Elizabeth May
Coast of Bays – Central – Notre Dame	Scott Simms	Alex Bracci	Noel Joe	Byron White
Avalon	Ken McDonald	Matthew Chapman		Greg Malone
Long Range Mountains	Gudie Hutchings	Josh Eisses		Lucas Knill
Labrador	Yvonne Jones	Larry Flemming		Tyler Colbourne
St. John’s South - Mount Pearl	Seamus O’Regan	Terry Martin		Alexandra Hayward
Bonavista – Burin -Trinity	Churence Rogers	Sharon Vokey		Kelsey Reichel
St. John’s East	Nick Whalen	Joedy Wall	Jack Harris	David Peters

Take Action:

We are taking our message to the federal candidates and we need your help. For reference, here is the list of candidates in your area. Please use the template letter to reach out.

Template letter to the leaders of federal party leaders

Please adapt this template as appropriate

September 12, 2019

[Insert Recipient]

[Insert Greeting]

The Federal Government implemented the Wastewater System Effluent Regulations (WSER) in 2012. Newfoundland and Labrador is one of the most impacted regions in Canada with 197 outfalls in 115 different municipalities and an initial estimated capital cost of more than \$600 million. Without a federal funding plan dedicated to financially support the strategy, many municipalities simply cannot comply.

[Insert name of municipality here] supports the policy goals set out through the WSER. We want to be good stewards of our coastal environment, but we cannot do this and meet the requirements of the WSER without more time and money.

We are asking candidates to support our request to reopen the window for a transitional authorization (TA) application under the WSER so municipalities with outfalls exceeding the 100m³ threshold can do the work needed to research wastewater system upgrade needs and plan their execution. Receiving a TA will ease the enforcement burden on municipalities and put them back on a compliance path.

Current infrastructure funding available in our province is not adequate to address our wastewater system needs and to meet the other pressing infrastructure issues we currently have, including providing safe drinking water to our residents. We are calling on candidates to support a permanent doubling of the Gas Tax Fund so that municipalities can support their upcoming wastewater infrastructure needs.

[Insert name of municipality here] looks forward to your support.

Sincerely,

Municipal Representative

c: Bill Karsten, FCM President
c: Tony Keats, MNL President