

**REPORT TO REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY COMMISSION
MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 2021**

SUBJECT **Greater Victoria Drinking Water Quality – 2020 Annual Report**

ISSUE SUMMARY

To present the 2020 annual report to the Regional Water Supply Commission prior to submission to the provincial regulator.

BACKGROUND

The Capital Regional District (CRD) undertakes a comprehensive water quality monitoring program as part of its multi-barrier approach to provide a safe drinking water supply to the region. The Water Quality Monitoring program reports water trends on a regular basis to the Commission, along with a comprehensive annual report for each calendar year. The Greater Victoria Drinking Water Quality 2020 Annual Report is attached as Appendix A. Water suppliers in BC are responsible for monitoring and providing an annual report to the provincial regulator (i.e., Island Health Authority). To assist in meeting these responsibilities, the CRD has prepared this report, which will be distributed to Island Health and all municipal water purveyors, and posted on the CRD website.

ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1

The Regional Water Supply Commission recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

That the Greater Victoria Drinking Water Quality 2020 Annual Report be approved.

Alternative 2

That the Regional Water Supply Commission direct staff to provide further information.

IMPLICATIONS

Environmental & Climate Implications

The report indicates that our source water remains in good condition and there is excellent drinking water quality in all system components of the Greater Victoria Drinking Water System. The system is monitored for physical, chemical and biological water quality parameters. All trends are stable and indicate good conditions overall. Although operation of the new hypochlorite plant at the Goldstream Water Treatment Plant remained temporarily suspended throughout 2020 to complete work on some of the system's components, the existing treatment using ultraviolet radiation and a sequence of chlorination and chloramination remained effective in managing low risks associated with the unfiltered water supply.

Monitoring results indicate the CRD continues to meet guidelines for maintaining an unfiltered source water supply. Further monitoring within the distribution systems also indicates a good balance between managing bacterial growth and ensuring good water quality with low concentrations of disinfection byproducts.

The post-wildfire water quality assessment, in the wake of two wildfires in the Sooke Lake catchment (August 16 and 21, 2020), concluded that this event did not have any measurable short-term impact on the source water quality. While not expected to occur, ongoing regular water quality monitoring in the watershed will detect any potential long-term water quality impacts.

Financial and Regulatory Implications

The reporting function is included within the overall budget for the Water Quality Monitoring Program. This task is essential for ensuring there is adequate information to inform and work with Island Health officials, meet provincial regulatory requirements and federal guidelines, and ensure CRD staff have sufficient information to maintain proper oversight of the water supply system.

The CRD continues to provide compliance monitoring of the municipal systems within the region to deliver effective and efficient oversight for both monitoring and reporting of water quality within the overall distribution system. Responsibility for any issues that may arise remains the responsibility of the municipalities.

Social Implications

The full disclosure of water quality monitoring data maintains public confidence that the CRD is effectively managing the regional drinking water supply. The data and reports are available online through the CRD public website. Staff respond to direct customer concerns and questions, and work with CRD operational staff, municipal staff, small system operators and Island Health officials to ensure good communication and support for the overall system.

CONCLUSION

The water quality monitoring program remains an essential component in the delivery of a safe drinking water supply to the region. Monitoring results summarized in the Greater Victoria Drinking Water Quality – 2020 Annual Report indicate good water quality overall with the low risks associated with the unfiltered source water being well managed by the CRD multi-barrier approach. Once the report is received and approved by the Board, it will be submitted to the Island Health Authority, as per requirement under the BC Drinking Water Protection Act.

RECOMMENDATION

The Regional Water Supply Commission recommends to the Capital Regional District Board:

That the Greater Victoria Drinking Water Quality 2020 Annual Report be approved.

Submitted by:	Glenn Harris, Ph.D., R.P.Bio., Senior Manager, Environmental Protection
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

ATTACHMENT

Appendix A: Greater Victoria Drinking Water Quality – 2020 Annual Report