



REPORT TO SAANICH PENINSULA WASTEWATER COMMISSION MEETING OF THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2025

SUBJECT Saanich Peninsula Liquid Waste Management Plan – Programs Summary and Update

ISSUE SUMMARY

To provide a summary and update on the Saanich Peninsula Liquid Waste Management Plan and related programs.

BACKGROUND

The Capital Regional District's (CRD) liquid waste services on the Saanich Peninsula represent a comprehensive framework for managing wastewater from private homes and businesses through municipal conveyance networks, into regional sewer mains and finally the wastewater treatment plant; where treated effluent is discharged into Bazan Bay, and solids are separated for further treatment or disposal. The service also includes supporting stormwater, source-control, and septic regulatory programs as well as outreach and educational programming. These programs ensure that liquid waste generated on the peninsula is managed responsibly, and in accordance with environmental legislation.

On behalf of Saanich Peninsula municipalities and First Nations, the CRD manages wastewater and stormwater according to strategies and commitments outlined in the Saanich Peninsula Liquid Waste Management Plan (LWMP). There are five general objectives of the LWMP:

- to ensure efficient, and optimal operation and maintenance of liquid waste infrastructure;
- to reduce contaminants entering the stormwater and sanitary systems and ultimately discharging to the environment;
- to monitor and assess risks associated with storm and sanitary effluent to ensure protection of human health, the environment and infrastructure;
- to report out on provincial and federal regulatory requirements and inform parties of interest and the public; and
- to plan and implement liquid waste infrastructure upgrades.

The various reports generated by these programs can be found on the CRD's public <https://www.crd.ca/programs-services>.

Operations and Maintenance

The CRD, municipalities, and First Nations are each responsible for operation, maintenance and asset management planning for their own infrastructure (conveyance pipes and pump stations). The CRD's Infrastructure and Water Services (IWS) Department is responsible for the operation and maintenance of sewage collection mains and pump stations collecting wastewater from municipal systems, and treatment at the Saanich Peninsula Treatment Plant. Treatment plant screenings and sludge are currently both being disposed of at the Hartland Landfill.

The treatment plant has been operating reliably and has maintained compliance with all provincial and federal regulatory requirements since commissioning, with very few compliance issues in the 25 years of operation. Current treatment plant maintenance projects include repairs and relining of major tanks and a comprehensive review of the odour control systems.

Biosolids Management

Wastewater residual solids produced at the treatment plant are dewatered and then disposed of at the Hartland Landfill as controlled waste, a practice that does not meet the beneficial use requirements and expectations of the provincial and federal governments. Residuals generated at the Saanich Peninsula Wastewater Treatment Plant (SPWWTP) had a temporary exemption from beneficial reuse from the Province during development of the Core Area Wastewater Treatment Project. The Core Area Residuals Treatment Facility (RTF) was constructed with the ability to receive and process sludges from non-Core Area facilities. Treatment of SPWWTP residual solids has been delayed due to an ongoing contractual dispute with the company operating the RTF. Once the dispute is settled, residual solids from the peninsula will be incorporated into the core area biosolids management program.

Inflow and Infiltration Management

Inflow and infiltration (I&I) management is an important component of the LWMP to ensure proper operation and longevity of the sewage conveyance system. I&I management on the Saanich Peninsula is currently facilitated primarily by the municipalities, with CRD support. The CRD presented findings of the most recent comprehensive I&I assessment, done as due diligence with respect to the overall age of the system, at the July 18, 2024 Commission meeting.

Corrosion and Odour Control

The Corrosion and Odour Program undertakes routine monitoring from approximately May through September each year. The objective of the program is to identify locations where sewer corrosion is a concern and where odours may cause a public nuisance. The CRD also provides guidance to municipalities in the operation of their odour and corrosion control systems. Finally, staff also respond to, and investigate, odour nuisance complaints submitted by the public. Since May 2024, three complaints have been received, all associated with CRD or municipal wastewater conveyance infrastructure. All three issues were investigated and addressed by staff.

Wastewater and Marine Environment Monitoring

The Wastewater and Marine Environment Program monitors and assesses wastewater quality and quantity, and the potential effects of the Bazan Bay outfall to the marine environment. Effluent quality monitoring for compliance with the treatment plant's Operational Certificate is also required. Monitoring is undertaken over a four-year cycle, and data and other information are routinely submitted in various forms (e.g., annual reports, compliance reports, etc.) to satisfy provincial and federal regulatory reporting requirements.

Source Control

The Regional Source Control Program protects Saanich Peninsula sewage collection and treatment facilities, public health and safety, and the marine receiving environment by reducing

the quantity of contaminants that industries, businesses, institutions and households discharge into the district's sanitary sewer systems. In 2017, the program was expanded on the Saanich Peninsula to also regulate and reduce contaminants that are discharged into municipal stormwater systems. The program generates annual reports summarizing their activities.

Stormwater Quality

The Stormwater Quality Program monitors stormwater quality at the point of discharge and reports back to municipalities and First Nations. The program helps to identify issues and assess the operation of municipal stormwater infrastructure and impacts to freshwater and marine aquatic environments. Program staff work closely with municipal staff through regular meetings and annual reporting.

Stormwater staff have also been working with the Pauquachin First Nation as it investigates opportunities to restore shellfish harvesting in Coles Bay. It is anticipated that other First Nations will be interested in starting similar efforts elsewhere on the Peninsula.

Staff have also been providing support to the Raincoast Conservation Foundation (RCF) Healthy Waters Program, WJOLELP (Tsartlip) First Nation, and the WSÁNEĆ Leadership Council to undertake a two-year water quality sampling program in Tod Creek. Final results from this program are expected in early 2026.

Finally, the CRD provides Island Health with summer recreational beach sampling support. This support is ultimately provided on behalf of municipalities and other beach owners (e.g., CRD Regional Parks) through the stormwater service.

Trucked Liquid Waste Management

The Trucked Liquid Waste (TLW) Program objectives are to ensure domestic and non-domestic trucked liquid waste (such as, residential and commercial septage, portable toilet waste, road and parking lot catch basin waste, restaurant oil and grease, and high-strength business wastes) is handled and disposed of in an appropriate and responsible manner, and to prevent adverse impacts to human health and the environment.

To achieve these objectives, education and outreach to trucked liquid waste haulers are regularly provided as part of the program. Currently, trucked liquid waste is treated at a private facility contracted by the CRD. Staff work with the contractor to ensure efficient operation for the region's TLW haulers.

Onsite Wastewater Management

The Onsite Wastewater Management Program is a pollution prevention program for septic systems that aims to protect public health and safety, local surface and groundwater resources, and the environment. The program endeavors to reduce the number of malfunctioning onsite wastewater systems by promoting proper care and maintenance through educational and voluntary maintenance assessment programs, and with regulatory requirements for system pump-outs.

On September 25, 2023 the District of North Saanich council passed a resolution to join this program which now makes North Saanich compliant with Section 4.4 of the LWMP. The CRD Onsite Bylaw became effective for 2,465 properties in North Saanich on January 1, 2025 and will, in part, support efforts to address potential contamination concerns in Coles Bay.

Planning

The LWMP was originally approved by the BC Ministry of Environment in October 1996, and has had four amendments, most recently consolidated in October 2009 (with minor corrections in 2011).

In 2019, following an audit, the Commission approved formation of a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), consisting of staff, municipal engineers, First Nations, and other parties in the LWMP (i.e., VAA and IOS), to review the LWMP and any outstanding commitments, and bring recommendations to the commission. First Nations were also given an option to participate independently in a forum of their choice. Staff anticipate that several liquid waste planning related exercises at various levels of government will occur in the near future, including development a regional strategic plan for wastewater, updates to municipal stormwater plans, and updated provincial guidance on LWMP development.

Staff anticipate bringing recommendations from the TAC for the timing and scope of a LWMP update or re-write for the Commission's consideration in early 2026.

CONCLUSION

The Capital Regional District, on behalf of municipal, First Nations and other parties of interest, ensures Saanich Peninsula liquid waste systems are well planned and managed to minimize potential impacts to human health and the environment and ensure compliance with provincial and federal regulatory requirements. These services are guided by commitments made in the Saanich Peninsula Liquid Waste Management Plan, and most are summarized in publicly available annual reports.

RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommendation. This report is for information only.

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