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NUNAVUT WATER BOARD
NUNAVUT IMALIRIYIN KATIMAYINGI
OFFICE DES EAUX DU NUNAVUT

Licence No: 3AM-GRA1624

June 03, 2021

Sarah Collins
Municipal Planning Engineer
Government of Nunavut
Department of Community and Government Services
Email: scollins@gov.nu.ca
Phone: 867-975-5478

Subject: Emergency Approval for bypassing the wastewater treatment plant for Water Licence No: 3AM-GRA1624 held by Government of Nunavut, Community and Government Services for the Hamlet of Rankin Inlet

Dear Ms. Collins:

On May 26, 2021, the Nunavut Water Board (NWB or Board) received an email notification informing the Board about a leak in the Johnston Cove lift station in Rankin Inlet. At present, the leaking effluent is being contained and pumped back into the wet well at an approximate rate of 5 m³/day. A consultant (Dillon Consulting Ltd.) is supporting Government of Nunavut, Community and Government Services (GN-CGS) in the investigation and repair efforts.

The GN-CGS stated that during the repair works, the sewage treatment system may need to be bypassed for up to 3 days. Consequently, during the bypass approximately 1,600 m³ of raw sewage may have to be directed around the sewage treatment system (without going through the wastewater treatment plant) and discharged into the marine environment (Prairie Bay).

As per NWB advise, on May 27, 2021, GN-CGS submitted a formal request to allow for the direct discharge of sewage from the lift station into Prairie Bay, bypassing the wastewater treatment plant as per Part D, Item 1 of the Licence 3AM-GRA1624.

With the recognition that the NWB does not have jurisdiction over discharges into the marine environment and that such discharges are within the jurisdiction of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), the NWB distributed the request for comments from ECCC in relation to the request on May 27, 2021, with a deadline for submissions of May 31, 2021. On May 31, 2021, comments were received stating their duties of the administration and enforcement of the pollution prevention provisions of the *Fisheries Act* and how that applies to the discharge or release of sewage directly into marine environment.

In considering this request, the Board recognizes that in this emergency, the proposed bypass of

the sewage treatment system cannot be avoided during repairs and that the release will be for a short time and the potential for impact to surface water would be limited.

The Board has therefore approved the request for Modification through the Board Motion No. **2021-A1-002**, dated June 02, 2021, as required under Part D, Item 1 of Licence 3AM-GRA1624. As requested by ECCC, the Board requires the Licensee to take all reasonable measures to mitigate impacts and prevent further damage. The Applicant is strongly encouraged to make every effort to expedite the repair and reduce the duration of the bypass being engaged.

The Board also requires submission of a written report once repair works have been completed. This report will include the following:

- Start and stop dates of bypass,
- quantity of effluent released,
- mitigation measures used, and
- a summary of the repair works completed.

In granting this proposed modification and bypass request, the Board emphasizes that the NWB's jurisdiction is limited to freshwater and does not apply to discharges into the marine environment. The Licensee is reminded that when discharging into the marine environment during the bypass of the sewage treatment plant the Licensee is bound by the general provisions of s. 36(3) of the *Fisheries Act* (and other applicable laws as stated by ECCC), prohibiting the release of deleterious substances into waters frequented by fish as follows:

36(3) Subject to subsection (4), no person shall deposit or permit the deposit of a deleterious substance of any type in water frequented by fish or in any place under any conditions where the deleterious substance or any other deleterious substance that results from the deposit of the deleterious substance may enter any such water.

Consequently, the Board advises the Licensee to seek guidance and direction from ECCC regarding the specific compliance requirements associated with the direct discharge into the marine environment during the plant bypass.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact the undersigned at (867) 360-6338 or ali.shaikh@nwb-oen.ca at your earliest convenience.



Mohammad Ali Shaikh
Nunavut Water Board,
Technical Advisor

cc: Distribution List – Kivalliq