

أ⁴ت√انه میدرکت کولا Department of Health Munaqhiliqiyitkut Ministère de la Santé

Justin Hack

Water Resource Officer

INAC

Igaluit, NU

By email

July 20, 2016

RE: Cape Dorset Sewage Lagoon Malfunction

Dear Mr. Hack:

The Department of Health through routine Environmental Health inspection has identified that the sewage lagoon in Cape Dorset has been malfunctioning (inspection and correspondence to Cape Dorset SAO Ed Devereaux April, 2016). While the specific time period for this malfunction has not been delineated, we are aware that this is a chronic situation. The Department of Health is also aware that local shellfish harvesting occurs in proximity of the sewage entering the marine environment. INAC has shared the effluent analysis (exiting the lagoon) and the parameters exceed both the Canadian Shellfish Sanitation effluent criteria for fecal coliforms and the Northwest Territories Guidelines for the Discharge of Treated Municipal Wastewater. The Department of Health has the authority and responsibility to determine whether the release of sewage presents a health hazard. Clearly with the potential implication of a valuable traditional food source, the Cape Dorset sewage lagoon malfunction presents a health hazard.

The Chief Medical Officer of Health for the Territory of Nunavut is responsible to protect the health of Nunavummiut. Under the Public Health Act and Public Sewerage System Regulations: Section 6(1) No final disposal of effluent from a sewage system shall be carried out in a manner that creates (a) a health hazard with respect to water supplies, swimming beaches or any body of water in the area; Section 4(3)-Where a Medical Health Officer or a Health Officer is satisfied that the operation of a public sewerage system does not comply with these regulations, he or shall make a report the Chief Medical Officer of the details of the non-compliance together with recommendations for correction and shall furnish a copy of the report to the operator.



The inaccessibility to traditional food sources as a result of possible contamination places a stress on a culture that presently sees a significant amount of food insecurity. The Department of Health is seeking INAC to exercise their regulatory authority to direct the Hamlet to remediate the malfunctioning sewage lagoon and put a solution in place as soon as possible. In the meantime the Department of Health has been working with the Hamlet to provide messaging to the community to make them aware of the recommendation to discontinue harvesting in the area impacted by the sewage runoff.

Dr. Kim Barker, MD, CCFP, MPH, FRCP(C)

Chief Medical Officer of Health Department of Health Government of Nunavut

Médecin-hygiéniste en chef Ministère de la Santé Gouvernement du Nunavut

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