



Municipality of Cape Dorset

P.O. BOX 30

CAPE DORSET, NUNAVUT

X0A 0C0

TELEPHONE: (867) 897-8943

FAX: (867) 897-8030

July 20, 2016

~~June 23, 2016~~

Attention: Justin Hack
Water Resource Officer
Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0
Nunavut Regional Office

Re: Issues With The Cape Dorset Lagoon Systems

On behalf of the residents of Cape Dorset and as Mayor of this community I am writing you today to express our concerns with respect to our present sewage lagoon systems. These concerns are mainly being expressed as a health issue for the community as a whole.

Before I get into specifics, I would like to provide a little perspective by starting with some history on our lagoon systems:

When our community started out in the 1960s we had our 1st lagoon built as a **one cell lagoon** system, and for that time was large enough to take care of our sewage refuge needs.

Over the years, as the community grew in population, we eventually were able to get CGS to construct a 2nd lagoon system, which was made up of a **three cell lagoon** system. This lagoon was built close to the first lagoon and the 1st lagoon remained in use for emergency situations.

Then in 2007, CGS deciding to construct a very large 3rd **lagoon** in a totally different location away from the other two. This lagoon was to replace our previous lagoon systems, as they were approaching full capacity, if not already there. Construction of the 3rd lagoon and the access road were completed during 2007 but not commissioned.

Now, almost 10 years later, the commissioning of this third **lagoon** has yet to happen as it has some environmental issues that are costly to fix. This is after CGS has spent approximately \$10,000,000 towards the construction of it in the first place. CGS has stated that the earliest possible date for commissioning the 3rd lagoon will not be until sometime in 2019 and possibly later.

This is unacceptable to the community as the need for this new lagoon was determined to exist 10 years ago and here we are today with even a greater sewage disposal capacity problem.

In the interim, our community has to cope with the fact that it has a lagoon system that reaches full capacity as early as January each year. This is primarily due to two things:

1.) the size and constant growth of our community compared to fact that the capacity of the 1st and 2nd lagoons remains the same and

2.) the fact that our ice season goes from October to June each year. What I mean by that is the ice builds up so quickly, starting in October, that, by January its thickness reaches the top of the berms of the 1st and 2nd lagoons making it a situation that requires constant decanting to make room for each days sewage disposal. By January the ice is so thick (some places 14ft. thick) it becomes near impossible to decant and what we are decanting is basically the liquid refuse from that day from the community and this liquid refuse has no time to separate and settle. As you are aware, there is always more than biodegradable material being sent to the household sewage tank which means that type of material is going into the ocean.

This means that from January on we have to decant the cells in these lagoons 4 or more times a week the best we can for the remaining 6 months of this ice season. Council does not like this at all, as they are scared that harmful chemicals are being pumped into the ocean very close to where the community fishes and also harvests clams. But at the same time they are conscious of the fact that they have to do this so the community can continue to function.

We have talked to CGS (Mr. Bhabesh Roy) about this situation a few times and have even provided suggestion to possibly increase the capacity of the lagoon to help us resolve these interim concerns.

These suggestions are as follows:

- Construct a 4th cell in the 2nd lagoon in the area next to the 1st cell that appears to be appropriate, to such a size that it would help the community with its sewage capacity storage/discard needs in the interim.
- Build up the Berm walls in the 1st and 2nd lagoon to also increase the capacity of these lagoons

Other issues we are having in regards to the constant maintenance of this lagoon are as follows:

1. The culverts in the berms of the 2nd lagoon freeze up every year causing us to pump cells every 2 days from Jan to June
2. Extra unbudgeted costs to the Hamlet are incurred like the extra gasoline we consume when running the pumps to decant the cells of the lagoon, along with extra labour to decant (2 men, 8 hrs /day, 3 days a week) which would normally not be incurred
3. Snow melt in the spring causes a natural spring runoff from Kinngait Mountain that has in the past washed out berms in the 2nd lagoon.
4. Equipment, fuel, and manpower to repair and maintain the natural flow of water to help prevent this spring runoff
5. Capacity of system has been too small for the size of the community for the past ten years
6. Very expensive washout in the past, spring of 2015 cost 80,000
7. The 2nd lagoon (3 cell lagoon) is located too close to mountain to properly control spring runoff resulting in yearly unbudgeted for maintenance to prevent berm washouts
8. Lagoon repairs have consumed most of our screened gravel inventory for such repairs which effects availability of gravel for road repairs
9. The above improvements or commissioning of the 3rd lagoon would result in a better allocation of our resources every spring on other capital works projects instead of focusing on lagoon repairs

As a note, I would also like to also say that council is presently not interested in doing any of the Capital Repair Work on these lagoons as a result of a situation last year. We were requested by CGS to repair the berm that had seriously been washed away from the spring run off for a price that was less than the cost of performing the work.

These types of repairs would be classified as capital improvements that could/will have to be contracted out. The Hamlet is not interested in doing such work because it is still trying to recover from a deficit and cannot afford to take on any work that it will lose money or any work where we are not allowed to charge our Hamlet By-Law rates.

The other concern that CGS should have, with regards to addressing any of the above, is that the construction season here is very short and any repairs of a capital nature recommended above will have to be tendered quickly if they were to be done this summer

Lastly, I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this letter, and the community of Cape Dorset would appreciate any assistance or advice, where possible, that you may be able to provide to help us deal with any or all of these Health issues.

Yours truly



Padlaya Qiatsuk
Mayor