



Northwest
Territories Municipal and Community Affairs

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Gordon Wray
Chair, Northwest Territories Water Board
PO BOX 1500
YELLOWKNIFE NT X1A 2R3

Dear Mr. Wray:

**Sewage Treatment Risk Assessment
and Priority Setting Exercise for the Baffin Region**

Following your letter of March 31, 1995, I am pleased to report that Municipal and Community Affairs has completed the above exercise requested by the Water Board. A copy of the report is attached for your review.

The exercise was undertaken using an interdisciplinary team struck, at the your suggestion, from the Water Board's Technical Advisory Committee. The review team struck from the Technical Advisory Committee included the:

- Baffin Regional Health Board, Iqaluit;
- Department of Renewable Resources, Yellowknife;
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Iqaluit;
- Department of the Environment, Yellowknife; and
- Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Iqaluit.

The analysis methodology followed a procedure of using a weighted factor analysis. A matrix was developed in an attempt to place some objectivity into what can be a very subjective process.

The matrix consisted of four areas:

- documented problems regarding health and/or the environment;
- concerns regarding public health risk, land sensitivity, receiving water sensitivity, and regulatory and compliance aspects;



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- concern for the extent of potential impact as a result of the size of the community; and
- advice to management where the review team member provides his/her personal comment on the situation.

In part, the report concluded that:

1. Iqaluit and Pangnirtung are seen both by MACA and the review team as the highest priorities for the Baffin Region.
2. Nanisivik is seen by the review team as the number 4 priority in the region. The ranking comes primarily from the two concerns that: raw sewage is discharged, and the discharge does not meet the Municipal Effluent Guidelines. Aquatic specialists also considered the receiving water, Strathcona Sound, to be relatively sensitive.
3. The review team sees the need to eliminate raw sewage discharges regardless of the impact on public health or the environment.

I am pleased to advise that MACA's current capital plan identifies the Iqaluit and Pangnirtung sewage treatment facilities as top priorities. A table showing the Department's current Baffin Region capital forecasting plan for sewage treatment improvement projects is found as Table 3 in the report. Following consideration of the report by the Board, I look forward to your comments.

Regardless of the outcome of this exercise, and the unresolved question of responsibility for the facilities, the Department is as concerned as the Water Board that the domestic sewage is properly managed. Municipal and Community Affairs is now collaborating with Nanisivik Mines Limited to undertake an assessment study over this summer.

The study will determine if environmental or public health impacts exist as a result of the current practice in light of our continuing practice in a number of communities, and our research in wetlands and overland flow treatment processes. If unacceptable impacts are found, the study will make recommendations for improvements.

The terms of reference are now in the early stages of development. They will be finalized in consultation with the Technical Advisory Committee and the Nunavut Water Board Transition Team. Once finalized, I will forward them to you.

I would appreciate receiving any further advice you wish to provide on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Ballantyne', written in a cursive style.

Penny Ballantyne
Deputy Minister

attachment

cc John McConnell
Mine Manager
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Nunavut Water Board Transition Team
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Mike Ferris, MACA, Baffin Region

Ken Lovely, Deputy Minister, PW&S