

Environment Canada Environnement Canada

Environmental Protection Branch  
NWT Division  
Box 370  
Yellowknife, NWT X1A 2N3

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10 June 1996

Frank Pearce  
Municipal Operations Officer  
Municipal and Community Affairs  
Baffin Region  
Iqaluit, Nunavut

re: Your Request for Information

This letter is further to your request for information regarding the requirements of Section 36 of the Fisheries Act relative to the possible discharge of wash water from the Pangnirtung Fish Plant directly to the ocean.

It is our understanding that the operating season is about 60 days per year. On a daily basis, 12,000 L of water containing 2 L of foam detergent are used and approximately 5,000 kg of fish are processed. All other sewage is handled separately. All dry offal (bones, heads, etc.) are provided to dog owners and plant employees or are dumped separately on land.

Disposal of the soapy wash water directly to the ocean would not be in contravention of Section 36 of the Fisheries Act. However, Environment Canada does not advocate the disposal of grey water outside a sewage lagoon. As there is currently no sewage lagoon in Pangnirtung, routing the wash water/grey water directly to the ocean would not result in a lower standard of treatment. When a sewage lagoon is in place, this practice should be revisited.

In the absence of a sewage lagoon, Environment Canada has no objection to the discharge of the wash water directly to the ocean. However, any outfall should be equipped with a screen to remove solid material.

If a decision is made to propose a separate fish plant wash water discharge on land, other regulatory agencies (NWT Water Board, Department of Renewable Resources and the Department of Health and Social Services) should be consulted. The discharge could require a licence under the NWT Waters Act, the provisions of the Northwest Territories Environmental Protection Act may apply, and there could be health considerations.

You mentioned during our telephone conversation, that some of the dry offal might be barged for disposal of at sea. Please be aware that disposal of fish offal at sea requires the issuing an Ocean Disposal Permit under Part VI of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act. Should you require further information on applying for an Ocean Disposal Permit or any other points in this letter, please contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely

*Laura Johnston*  
Laura Johnston

cc: G. Wray, Chairman, NWT Water Board  
E. Paquin, Director, Environmental Protection, Renewable Resource  
Dr. Richard Bagen, Medical Officer of Health

