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September 21, 2001

## Qikiqtarjuaq says GN shipped dirty fuel

**DENISE RIDEOUT**  
**Nunatsiaq News**

**IQALUIT** — Qikiqtarjuaq officials suspect a bad batch of fuel is to blame for the busted generators at their water-pumping station and broken fuel pumps in hamlet vehicles.

Fuel pumps in the municipal loader, compactor and garbage truck and in two generators at the water station have been replaced since August.

The mechanical problems surfaced shortly after a tanker delivered diesel and gasoline to Qikiqtarjuaq.

Don Pickle, the hamlet's senior administrative officer, suspects there's a connection.

"We have really, really bad diesel fuel, heating fuel and gasoline. I think the government bought really, really, cheap, cheap gas and cheap, cheap diesel," Pickle said.

Pickle said the hamlet has been overwhelmed with equipment problems.

"All our water generators are fried. In all of our heavy equipment (and) all of our water and sewer trucks, all the fuel injectors are worn out. They're things that usually last the life of the vehicle and they're all shot."

Mechanical glitches have also affected water service in the community.

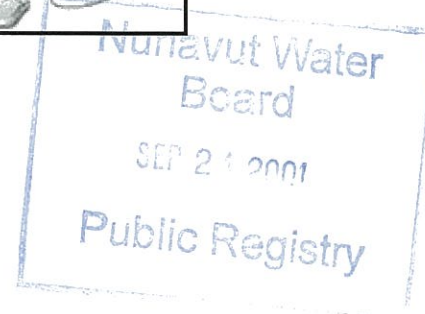
"I think the government bought really, really, cheap, cheap gas and cheap, cheap diesel."

— Don Pickle, Qikiqtarjuaq's SAO

Fuel pumps in the two diesel generators that pump the community's water broke last week. The generators were purchased new last summer.

After the breakdown, trucks were forced to pump water from the river.

The situation has been a headache for the municipal mechanic, Gilbert Evans.



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Last week he was clocking extra hours in the garage while trying to repair the equipment.

"We got problems with our sewage truck here. It's a brand new truck. I've got it here in the garage right now. Either the injector's gone or the pump's gone," he said.

It's a pricey problem too, Evans said.

The hamlet purchased a new pump from an Ottawa manufacturer for \$3,600.

hey're having other pumps rebuilt, at a cost of about \$2,000 apiece.

Evans, who's been the mechanic for the municipality for a year, said when other mechanics examined the fuel pumps they verified what he'd suspected all along.

"We sent one of the pumps down to Ottawa for repair and they told us we got a very, very poor quality of fuel. The pump was completely worn out, and that's out of an engine that's barely a year old."

Pickle thinks it will be difficult to convince the Nunavut government to take a closer look at the fuel they bought for Qikiqtarjuaq.

"I sort of think we're going to have to take independent samples and get our own tests done before we'll be able to get anyone (at the GN) to pay attention to it," he said.

Pickle said he's not sure he'd trust the GN to test the fuel.

The GN's petroleum-products office says the fuel supply that went to Qikiqtarjuaq has already been tested several times and the results show it's of good quality.

"Prior to discharging it into a tank we test the product," said Susan Makpah, director of the Petroleum Products Division.

Once the fuel settled in the tank, the Petroleum Products department sent a sample to the Alberta Research Council in Edmonton for analysis. Makpah's department received the results Aug. 23.

"There is no problems with the diesel products in Qikiqtarjuaq at all, according to the results that we got from our contractor," she said.

Makpah said the department could conduct more tests if the hamlet requests it. But she said no one from Qikiqtarjuaq has even reported the fuel problems to the government.

The tanker that delivered fuel to Qikiqtarjuaq also serviced Iqaluit, Repulse Bay, Hall Beach, Pangnirtung and Igloolik. None of those communities has

reported problems, Makpah said.

In the meantime, Qikiqtarjuaq residents are dealing with another problem, this time with the gas supply.

Evans, the mechanic, said he's replaced fuel pumps in about 10 company and personal vehicles. That's nearly all the vehicles in Qikiqtarjuaq.

"We're not sure if that's bad gas or just a coincidence," he said. "But it's a big coincidence because it's happened to all of them."

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