



SANITARY SEWER BYLAW UPDATE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

1. Why is the City of Prince George updating its Sanitary Sewer Bylaw?

The City's current Sanitary Sewer Bylaw is 13 years old and requires updating to apply current knowledge for effective management of the system. Updating the bylaw is a proactive and fiscally responsible initiative to safeguard City infrastructure, public health, property and the environment, now and into the future.

2. What are the key changes being considered?

- New name/new focus: "Sanitary Sewer Use Bylaw" (servicing items moved to the City's Subdivision and Servicing Bylaw);
- Emphasis on fairness, consistency and effectiveness;
- Clarified responsibilities of the City and of property owners;
- Updates to Prohibited Wastes list;
- Updates to Restricted Wastes limits;
- Enhancements to Source Controls;
- New requirements for septage waste disposal;
- Actions to be taken by responsible party if unauthorized discharge occurs; and
- Additional means for addressing non-compliance.

3. What is Source Control?

Source control focuses on identifying and controlling harmful substances before they are discharged to sewer and/or the environment. Control at the source is effective and reduces costs of sanitary sewer maintenance and wastewater treatment.

4. Have other cities adopted sanitary sewer use bylaws with source controls?

Yes. Since the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) released their "Model Sewer Use Bylaw" in 2009, many local governments (small, medium and large) have updated their bylaws to a sewer use format. Some of these cities are:

- CRD (Victoria & surrounding communities),
- Sooke
- Metro Vancouver
- Abbotsford
- Mission
- West Kelowna
- Nanaimo
- Alberta Capital Region
- Saskatoon
- Winnipeg
- Ottawa
- Toronto

Currently Kamloops, Powell River, Fort St. John, Fort Nelson and Tofino are updating their bylaws.



SANITARY SEWER BYLAW UPDATE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

5. Who does the proposed Sanitary Sewer Use Bylaw regulate?

The proposed Sanitary Sewer Use Bylaw regulates all users: residential, industrial, commercial and institutional.

6. Are there currently regulations to prevent harmful substances from entering the sanitary sewer?

Yes. The current City of Prince George Sanitary Sewer Bylaw lists “Prohibited Substances”, “Restricted Wastes” and provides for the issuance of waste discharge permits, which provide site specific conditions for waste discharge, for example site specific spill prevention.

In addition, the Provincial BC Building Code and Plumbing Code require that operations that discharge wastewater with fats, oils, grease and/or sediment must install an interceptor.

7. What are Codes of Practice?

- Codes of Practice are a set of minimum standards for wastewater pre-treatment, inspection, maintenance and record keeping that are tailored for specific commercial operations.
- Codes of Practice provide the details needed for effective management of an interceptor already required under the BC Building Code.
- Code of Practice requirements are applied consistently to all operations to assist owners/operators in preventing harmful discharges.

8. Why is wastewater from food service operations a concern?

Operations that prepare food for public consumption routinely have wastewater with high amounts of fats, oils and grease (FOG). Many have grease interceptors, but they may not be sized correctly, have the right kitchen fixtures plumbed to them or be inspected and maintained frequently enough to effectively keep FOG from entering the sanitary sewer. FOG and other discharged food waste are responsible for:

- Sanitary sewer blockages;
- Sewer backups that pose a risk to the public and the environment;
- Fouling of sanitary sewer pipes and pump stations;
- Increased sanitary sewer system maintenance; and
- Increased wastewater treatment costs.

9. Why is wastewater from mechanical repair operations a concern?

Operations that repair or maintain vehicles, engines, transmissions or other mechanical devices can have difficulty managing oil, grease, solvents, metals and solids. Oil/water and sediment interceptors must be appropriately sized, installed, inspected and maintained to prevent discharge of these substances which can cause:

- Sanitary sewer blockages and backups;
- Damage to sanitary sewer infrastructure;
- Dangerous conditions in the sanitary sewer system; and
- Discharge of substances that can't be effectively treated to local waterbodies.



SANITARY SEWER BYLAW UPDATE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

10. Why is wastewater from vehicle wash operations a concern?

Industrial, commercial and institutional operations that wash vehicle exteriors produce wastewater where:

- Oils, grease and metals can accumulate in sludge to levels where the sludge would be classified as a “controlled waste” or “hazardous waste”, requiring special disposal;
- High levels of acidity or alkalinity from cleaning products used can create dangerous sanitary sewer conditions for workers and damage infrastructure i.e. metal corrosion;
- Sand, soil and other solids can cause blockages and lead to sewer backups; and
- Sediment and oil/water interceptors must meet efficiency standards, be properly sized and plumbed for the operation, and maintained to ensure effective at source controls.

11. Will requirements in the Codes of Practice be phased in?

The Codes of Practice proposed for inclusion in the Sanitary Sewer Use Bylaw would be effective immediately for all new businesses following bylaw enactment. The City of Prince George is considering a three year implementation plan for all existing businesses to comply with the Code of Practice standards.

12. Will I need to hire professional assistance to comply with the Code of Practice for my business?

The City of Prince George Source Control Program will be developing Best Management Practice (BMP) education materials tailored for each Code of Practice sector. For most operations, this will provide sufficient information for the operator to comply with the Code. There may be some operations that choose the assistance of either engineering or environmental consultants or find that they require professional assistance due to the complexity of their operation.

13. How will the Sanitary Sewer Use Bylaw be enforced?

The proposed Sanitary Sewer Use Bylaw allows for a stepped approach, beginning with education but also including:

- Written warning or notice of bylaw violation;
- Written orders directing action(s) to be taken;
- Municipal Ticketing with fines;
- Cost recovery- City taking action to remedy a contravention that has not been addressed and charging the costs of doing so to the property owner; and
- Charges.

14. Who will enforce the Sanitary Sewer Use Bylaw?

It is proposed that enforcement of the updated bylaw be expanded to include authorized Utilities Division staff. Bylaw Officers will provide enforcement where complex issues arise.



SANITARY SEWER BYLAW UPDATE QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

15. When is the proposed Sanitary Sewer Use Bylaw expected to come into effect?

It is expected that the bylaw with accompanying Report to Council would be submitted in June 2019. Depending on the directions received from Council, the Sanitary Sewer Use Bylaw could be enacted in July 2019.

16. When will the updated bylaw be available for public viewing?

The updated bylaw will be available for public review and comment when it is provided to Council. Council will determine the amount of time that the new bylaw will be open to the public for comment.