

## MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF COLCHESTER INFORMATION ITEM

**ITEM:** Northern Pulp Misinformation

**DATE PRESENTED:** October 28, 2021

**COMMITTEE:** Council

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this item is to provide Council with information on the wastewater being hauled from Northern Pulp to our Central Colchester Wastewater Treatment Facility (CCWWTF). The information is presented below in a 'Frequently Asked Question' format.

### **SUMMARY/BACKGROUND**

- ***How did we become involved with Northern Pulp?***

Northern Pulp contacted the Public Works office in early June of 2020 asking if we would consider accepting wastewater from their site at the CCWWTF.

- ***When did Northern Pulp begin hauling wastewater to the Central Colchester Wastewater Treatment Facility?***

Northern Pulp provided chemical analysis for our review and shipped a load to us on July 13, 2020 as a test. We agreed to do a one week trial the following week, with loads arriving Monday to Friday. Based on the trial and the data as provided, staff confirmed that the CCWWTF was capable of safely handling the product within the Municipality's Sewer Use By-law. We issued an approval to haul on August 2, 2020, which was valid until December 31, 2020.

- ***When was this issue discussed at Council?***

The wastewater from Northern Pulp was discussed at June Council in 2020 when Northern Pulp had first requested direct hauling to our County facility. The discussion was held In-Camera as per the provision for negotiations in Section 22 (2) (e) of the Municipal Government Act. Because the Sewer Use By-law gives full authority to the Director of Public Works to make decisions on such matters, it was not necessary for Council to make a motion in open session. However, information on wastewater from Northern Pulp was included in the Public Works Director reports in November 2020, March 2021, and August 2021. Revenues from Northern Pulp were also discussed during 2021 budget deliberations.

- ***How do the shipments fit into Council Policies and By-laws?***

The County Sewer By-law and Sewer Use Policy allow the Director of Public Works to accept wastewater which exceeds the Policy limits for quality, provided a surcharge agreement is put in place (which is the case for Northern Pulp).

- ***What is the source of wastewater being shipped to us?***

The material is a mixture of leachate and stormwater.

- ***How much wastewater is being shipped to us?***

Wastewater from Northern Pulp is dumped into our former leachate storage tank at the CCWWTF and bled into the plant over a 24 hr period. The maximum volume we can accept in a day is related to the volume of the tank. We accept a daily maximum of 180 cubic metres per day. They usually only deliver to us during regular workdays, 5 days per week. During wet months like March and April, we may see 150 cubic metres per day, but during dry months like August, we would only see 30 cubic metres per day. The average flow to our plant ranges between 15,000 to 20,000 cubic metres per day, making the Northern Pulp contribution roughly 1% of total.

- ***What kind of testing is being done?***

The Approval as issued by us to Northern Pulp requires weekly independent testing of COD, Volume, pH and suspended solids. In addition, the County grabs a daily sample for in-house analysis of COD, pH, suspended solids and ammonia. Billing is based on the Colchester sample results. Northern Pulp also does a daily internal test for COD and sends us the results. Monthly, we require a full test from an independent lab for all section 6a parameters in our Sewer Use Policy. Then quarterly we require a test for hydrocarbons from an independent lab.

- ***Is the Northern Pulp Wastewater affecting our treatment plant or final effluent?***

No. Our plant operates under an approval as issued by Nova Scotia Environment. This approval requires that our final effluent quality have a BOD of 25 mg/L, Suspended Solids of 25 mg/L, pH between 6.0 and 9.0 and E-coli of 1000 counts per 100 mL. The Northern Pulp Wastewater is not affecting our final effluent quality or the operation of our plant.

- ***What are the financial benefits to the County?***

Our Approval to Northern Pulp includes a fee of \$30 per cubic metre of wastewater delivered (consistent with Council's Fee Policy). We also apply a fee for any instances where the COD exceeds our By-law limit of 600 mg/L. Since Northern Pulp began hauling in July of 2020, the County has invoiced them for roughly \$800,000.

- ***Is there any clause in the hauling approval which allows Northern Pulp to exceed regulatory limits for our plant as set by Nova Scotia Environment?***

No. Our plant limits are based on treated effluent quality and there are no provincially regulated limits for what is entering the plant. While the wastewater from Northern Pulp has elevated COD (which also relates to BOD), these numbers are not causing us to exceed our limits on the treated effluent quality. Our plant is able to treat the material. The County's Sewer Use Policy and Sewer By-law apply quality limits to sewage entering the sewage system, however these can be exceeded with a surcharge fee if approved by the Director of Public Works. The Approval to Haul Wastewater contains a clause which allows an exceedance of pH and COD. A surcharge fee is applied to any COD exceedances. The current approval to haul expires on December 31, 2021.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- N/A

Primary Author	Manager/Director	Chief Administrative Officer
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