

# NEWSLETTER

Issue 1

December 2008

**MUNICIPAL/PROVINCIAL JOINT ADVISORY GROUP ON WATER & WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT IN NOVA SCOTIA**

## Municipal/Provincial Joint Advisory Group Formed

A new advisory group on water and wastewater management in Nova Scotia has been formed to provide a mechanism for effective consultation and collaboration between the provincial government and municipalities in Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia Environment (NSE) has signed a Terms of Reference with the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) and the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS). Official signing of the Terms of Reference (ToR) was held at the Annual Meeting of UNSM in Yarmouth on September 19th, 2008.

A similar advisory group on municipal wastewater effluent was formed in 2005 and organized 13 consultation sessions on the **Canada-Wide Strategy on Municipal Wastewater Effluent (MWWE)** —a strategy being developed by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment. UNSM President Robert Wrye spoke of the previous advisory group as being a “model of partnership” The success of this group led to a decision to broaden the focus of municipal/provincial collaboration to include more than wastewater-related issues and concerns. The MWWE Strategy will begin implementation in the near future.



**Left to Right:** The Honourable Mark Parent, Minister of Environment; Deputy Mayor Robert A. Wrye, President, Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities; and Brian Keizer, President, Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia— Official Signing of the ToR

President Wrye also spoke of the “need to continue to be fully engaged in the development and implementation of strategies and programs”.

In his speech to the delegates, Minister Parent stated that by “working together in this way, we will ensure we all enjoy healthier and better-managed water resources.”

In 2007 the province embarked on the development of a comprehensive **Water Resource Management Strategy for Nova**

**Scotia** to be completed in 2010. A series of public workshops was held during April and May 2008 for input on ways to better protect, preserve and use water in Nova Scotia.

Effective communication and contribution from municipal stakeholders will be key as we move forward in developing and implementing initiatives towards ensuring that water and wastewater management in the province will continue to meet both our current and future needs.

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### Of Special Interest:

- The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment are expected to officially sign the MWWE Strategy in early 2009.

## MWWE Strategy



Development of the Canada-wide Strategy for the Management of Municipal Wastewater Effluent (MWWE) began in 2003 through the Canadian Council of Ministers of Environment (CCME). It is expected that the draft strategy will be signed by the ministers in early 2009 which will then initiate a process where all municipal wastewater operations will be required to meet the standards set out in the strategy.

Nova Scotia municipalities have been actively involved in the strategy development process since 2005. Many Nova Scotia municipal representatives attended regional meetings in 2005 & 2006 in Moncton and Amherst. M/P JAG organized and held 13 provincial consultation sessions throughout the province on 2 separate draft versions of the strategy. Comments were

received and shared with the MWWE Development Committee (DC) and revisions were made to the strategy following those consultation sessions.

The key outcomes identified in the final draft strategy are:

- Environmental and Human Health Protection;
- Regulatory Clarity; and
- Funding and Economics Implications.

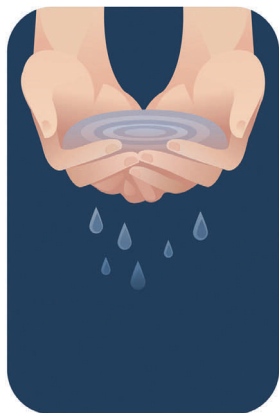
Once signed by the CCME, a 33-year timeline will be in place for municipal wastewater systems to meet the standards. A period of 3 years has been established at the beginning for the federal government to enter into agreements with the provinces and territories to provide municipalities with a one-window regulatory approach.

A risk analysis will be conducted in the early

phases to identify the level of risk—high, medium or low— for individual municipal systems. The timeline for meeting the standards is based on the level of risk— high risk within 10 years; medium within 20 years; and lower risk systems within 30 years.

The province will be developing programs to ensure that municipal wastewater facilities in Nova Scotia will meet the requirements of the agreed-upon strategy.

Details of provincial wastewater initiatives and programs will be communicated and consulted on through the M/P JAG. In reference to the advisory group, Minister Parent stated “they will continue to advise on development of a nation-wide strategy on effluent management as undertaken by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment.”



## M/P JAG Membership

The Municipal/Provincial Joint Advisory Group (M/P JAG) consists of the following:

- Nova Scotia Environment (chair) is represented from two divisions: 1) Environmental Monitoring and Compliance, and 2) Environmental and Natural Areas Management.

- Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations is also a member of the advisory group representing the province.

- The Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities provides representation from elected municipal officials in the province.

- The Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia contributes a municipal administrative perspective to the group.

Municipal Associations select their representatives. The M/P JAG will meet quarterly, or as required.

## Provincial Water Resource Management Strategy

“To help keep Nova Scotia clean, beautiful, and prosperous we must manage our natural water resources. That’s why Nova Scotia Environment is coordinating the development of a comprehensive water resource management strategy for the province. Although the province is taking the lead, the work calls for a collaborative effort.” This was part of the message from Environment Minister Mark Parent in early 2008 as the province entered into comprehensive water resource management strategy to be developed over a 3-year time frame.

The first round of public consultations for the strategy have been completed. There were nearly 400 participants in total, with 210 people who

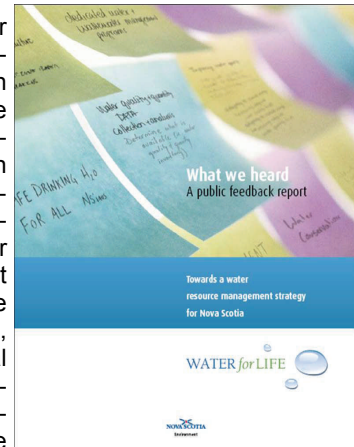
attended the 14 public workshops that were held across the province. Those in attendance represented a good cross-section of the population and group discussions were very dynamic and interactive.

Public comments on the best ways to protect, preserve, and use the province’s water resources have been gathered and compiled into a document “What we heard: A public feedback report,” which was released on September 18th, 2008 at the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM) fall conference held in Yarmouth. The full document can be found online at: [www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water](http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water)

The results of the public consultation pointed clearly to eight themes that need to be ad-

ressed by a water resource management strategy which are discussed in the report. It also includes details on participation by municipalities, associations, and water professionals that can be found in the report appendices, as can individual comments addressing each of the issues raised in the workshops and discussion paper.

The information received through this public consultation process will go toward developing a draft water resource management strategy for Nova Scotia. In late 2009 the draft strategy will go through another consultation process to confirm the direction proposed.



## Atlantic Canada MOU on Environmental Cooperation

On June 6th, 2008, the government of Canada and the Atlantic provinces entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on environmental cooperation. Signed by Environment Ministers John Baird (Canada); Mark Parent (Nova Scotia) Roland Hache (New Brunswick); George Webster (Prince Edward Island); and Charlene Johnson (Newfoundland and Labrador), the five-government agreement contains a broad set of principles of cooperation and sets out to achieve the following:

- Facilitate a consistent, efficient and transparent collaborative approach to environmental protection and conservation in the Atlantic Provinces;
- Strengthen the ability of the federal-provincial governments to work together to achieve shared environmental objectives; and
- Guide the development of detailed MOU Annex Agreements which will set specific measures the Parties

will take to improve their individual and collective capacities to address shared priorities.

A water annex will be developed first.



Ministers Baird & Parent signing MOU

## **Municipal Source Water Protection**

### **New Waterford Source Water Protection Committee Formed**

Nova Scotia’s 2002 Drinking Water Strategy outlined a multi-barrier approach to achieve delivery of safe, clean drinking water. The multi-barrier approach consists of three barriers: keep it clean, make it safe, and prove it is safe.

To “keep it clean” all water treatment facility approvals in Nova Scotia now contain a condition requiring a Source Water Protection Plan for the drinking water source. To help develop this plan Cape Breton Regional Municipality held the first meeting of the New Waterford Source Water Protection Committee in July 2008. The committee is a diverse group of stakeholders including: private



**Kilkenny Lake Sign Posting**

and government landowners; Isle Royale ATV club members; and

New Waterford Fish and Game Association. Also attending the first meeting were provincial resource people from Nova Scotia Environment and Department of Natural Resources. The committee developed a terms of reference that will guide their work together to develop a Source Water Protection Plan.

Setting-up the committee is just the first step towards the development of a Source Water Protection Plan—further steps will be discussed in upcoming newsletters. In the meantime, for more information on municipal source water protection, visit: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/nse/water/sourcewater.asp>

### **MUNICIPAL/PROVINCIAL JOINT ADVISORY GROUP ON WATER & WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT IN NOVA SCOTIA**



**Environment**



## **Websites**

### **Government of Nova Scotia**

[www.gov.ns.ca](http://www.gov.ns.ca)

#### **UNSM**

[www.unsm.ca](http://www.unsm.ca)

#### **AMANS**

[www.amans.ca](http://www.amans.ca)

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