



GREATER MONCTON  
WASTEWATER  
COMMISSION

COMMISSION  
DES EAUX USÉES  
DU GRAND MONCTON

## NEWS RELEASE

August 5, 2014

For immediate release

### **Illegal disposal of petroleum hydrocarbon product in municipal collector sewers costly to Greater Moncton ratepayers**

**RIVERVIEW, N.B.** – The Greater Moncton Wastewater Commission (GMWC) treatment facility processes wastewater that contains various substances which are partially or completely removed via our treatment process.

Grease and oil of vegetable and animal origin are common constituents of wastewater in concentrations that allow for their removal through treatment processes. However, direct discharge of petroleum hydrocarbons to municipal sanitary sewer is prohibited by municipal sewer bylaws and GMWC guidelines.

On May 29, a substance resembling a petroleum hydrocarbon entered the GMWC treatment facility via its collector network. Strong odours were perceived at the GMWC facility. GMWC personnel inspected the system and traced the contamination upstream in the collector system with the assistance of City of Moncton personnel. Unfortunately, this effort was not successful in identifying the source of the contamination although it was deemed to be stemming from the eastern area of Moncton. It was later confirmed through analysis by independent laboratory RPC that this contaminant was likely a diesel product with some other heavier oil present in minimal quantities.

“Without GMWC personnel’s quick action in addressing the situation and retaining the contaminant within its system, there would have been a release directly to the Petitcodiac River, thus a significant pollution and environmental risk,” said Bernard LeBlanc, General Manager of the GMWC. “With that said, the preventative action by the GMWC comes at a financial cost to the Commission and its ratepayers.”

The oil spill clean-up at the GMWC facility lasted for more than a month and involved internal resources as well as external contractors. It was also subject to weather conditions and involved a significant contaminated product disposal cost. Between environmental cleaning services cost and total disposal fees the total cost exceeded \$54,000. The estimated volume of contaminated product disposed of was of nearly 90,965 litres (19,900 imperial gallons) of liquids as well as 13.31 metric tons of solid waste.



GREATER MONCTON  
WASTEWATER  
COMMISSION

COMMISSION  
DES EAUX USÉES  
DU GRAND MONCTON

In November 1996, the Commission faced a similar contamination issue which involved the spilling of 4,546 litres (1,000 imperial gallons) of Bunker “C” fuel into its system. At that time, remediation costs were more than \$79,000.

“The magnitude and cost of rectifying this type of contamination in the GMWC collector network and treatment facility needs to be clearly communicated to all stakeholders, including municipalities, the provincial government and ratepayers in the Greater Moncton area, as well as how they can assist in preventing such a discharge or identifying its source,” Mr. LeBlanc said. “It must also be stressed that the public was not at risk at any time because of this contamination since it was contained in the sewer system.”

“Enforcement of improper environmental disposal is undertaken by the provincial Department of Environment and Local Government. The department should be contacted if anyone becomes aware of any improper disposal of product to the environment, whether within or outside the sewer system,” he said.

Residents should not hesitate to contact the GMWC directly or their respective municipality should they become aware of any illegal or inappropriate discharge into the sewer system. This will assist authorities in identifying the responsible parties so that they can be held accountable for their actions from a financial and enforcement perspective.

The Commission greatly appreciates the community support received over the past 31 years and looks forward to ensuring an even more environmentally friendly treatment of Greater Moncton area’s wastewater, the end result being clean, recreation-friendly water discharge into the Petitcodiac River watershed.

The Greater Moncton Wastewater Commission ([www.gmsc.nb.ca](http://www.gmsc.nb.ca)) was established in 1983 to support the wastewater collection and treatment needs of the Dieppe, Moncton and Riverview tri-community. Since then, it has developed a 35-kilometre collection network and a treatment facility to best deliver on this mandate. It has also become a leader in the reuse of biosolids through the generation of type ‘AA’ compost (the highest grade currently achieved in Canada) as opposed to disposal in a landfill site. The organization is now positioning itself to further upgrade its facilities to provide an enhanced secondary treatment approach that will allow it to meet recently introduced mandatory federal regulations prior to the 2020 deadline.



GREATER MONCTON  
WASTEWATER  
COMMISSION

COMMISSION  
DES EAUX USÉES  
DU GRAND MONCTON

**Media contact:**

Bernard F LeBlanc, P.Eng.  
General Manager  
Greater Moncton Wastewater Commission  
506-387-7977, ext. 220  
[bleblanc@gmwc-ceugm.com](mailto:bleblanc@gmwc-ceugm.com)