

DATE: September 13, 2022

FILE: 5340-20/CVWPCC

TO: Chair and Members
Sewage Commission

FROM: James Warren
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

Supported by James Warren
Deputy Chief Administrative Officer

J. Warren

RE: CVWPCC Wastewater Testing

Purpose

To update the Sewage Commission on a collaboration with the Ministry of Health for testing of wastewater at the Comox Valley Water Pollution Control Centre.

Recommendation from the Deputy Chief Administrative Officer:

For information only.

Executive Summary

- Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, health authorities around the world have been working with scientists to develop and implement wastewater sampling and testing protocols to assess the presence and level of SARS-CoV-2 (the virus identified as causing COVID-19) within specific wastewater catchments areas.
- Over the past two years, Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) staff have reached out several times to health officials to signal a willingness to participate in similar initiatives here in British Columbia.
- Earlier this summer the Ministry of Health, working with the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCDCC), reached out to the CVRD to initiate a sampling and testing protocol.
- The first pick-up of wastewater samples is scheduled for Monday, September 19. Three samples will be taken each week, couriered to the BCCDC, and tested for SARS-CoV-2 and other pathogens.
- All costs for the program are being paid for by the BCCDC, who have also committed to open sharing of the results with the CVRD.
- Staff are pleased to be assisting with this worthwhile public health initiative and will report back to the Sewage Commission with an update in early 2023.

Prepared by:

K. La Rose

Kris La Rose, P.Eng.
Senior Manager of
Water/Wastewater Services

Concurrence:

M. Rutten

Marc Rutten, P.Eng.
General Manager of
Engineering Services