

March 25, 2020

To: Alberta Waterworks and Municipal Wastewater Owners and Operators

As a follow up to the message from Scott Milligan on March 23, 2020, I would like to provide you with the following guidance materials to further support municipal utility operations of drinking water and wastewater systems during this pandemic response phase, namely:

- 1) For Drinking Water: An up-to-date provincial map showing key Compliance, Approvals and Drinking Water Operations Specialist (DWOS) contacts for each area; and
- 2) COVID-19 Pandemic Planning for the Water and Wastewater Sector: Business Continuity Planning for Water & Wastewater Systems.

A Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) sheet is under development that will provide you with updated information on how to report the status of your system and how to reach out. Additional materials will also be forthcoming for municipal wastewater systems.

It is understandable that water and wastewater operators for your community are under unprecedented stress given the current COVID-19 pandemic situation.

It is imperative that when facility issues arise that owners/operators work with their associations (including the Alberta Water and Wastewater Operators Association (AWWOA) or the Alberta Public Works Association) pre-emptively as much as practical - before a situation (e.g. operator absence) poses a major risk for sustaining facility operations. If an Authorization Holder becomes aware of a substantive risk of not being able to meet their regulatory obligations (i.e. some days in advance), we strongly encourage you to contact local Environment and Parks (AEP) staff as soon as possible to help to pre-empt a drinking water or wastewater service disruption. This will help provide some lead-time to enable AEP staff to work with an operator(s) on mitigation actions. Of particular concern at this challenging time are risks related to operator absenteeism and supply chain disruptions for process chemical deliveries – both related to COVID-19 impacts.

For drinking water and wastewater systems with authorizations under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, contraventions must still be reported to EDGE (Environmental and Dangerous Goods Emergencies) at 1-800-222-6514 or

780-422-4505 as per regular operations. It is imperative that during this pandemic response period that drinking water and wastewater systems continue to meet AEP requirements to ensure the delivery of safe drinking water and wastewater municipal services to Albertans. This means Authorization Holders continue to meet all the terms and conditions contained within their respective authorizations related to facilities, resources, and operations staff. In the event that the Authorization Holder is unable to meet their regulatory obligations, that situation must be ***immediately*** reported to EDGE.

AEP wants to ensure that operational staff are not unnecessarily exposed to COVID-19 and that facilities can continue to function without service disruption. As a critical part of the drinking water and wastewater municipal industry, please take all precautions possible to minimize the risk of COVID -19 exposure. Follow the advice from the public health officials for members of the critical infrastructure sectors. It is recommended you stay up-to-date on the latest health advice through reliable sources such [Alberta Health Services \(AHS\)](#), [Health Canada](#) and the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#).

We also suggested that you ensure that your remote SCADA control data acquisition system and/or monitoring systems are in good working order. For example, an online chlorine analyzer with call out can dramatically reduce the amount of distribution chlorine sampling that an operator may need to do.

Again, AEP encourages a focus on early leading indicators and pre-emptive actions as much as practical to avoid and/or mitigate any potential service disruptions.

Sincerely,



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Attachments

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