

April 16, 2020

To: Alberta Waterworks and Municipal Wastewater Owners and Operators

Thanks once again for your teams working together to keep the essential services of drinking water and wastewater running without service disruptions. Further to AEP's previous e-mails, we want to keep you apprised of AEP's efforts to help support drinking water (DW) and wastewater (WW) systems during this COVID-19 response phase.

As we work through these difficult circumstances, we are broadening our communication scope to include Industrial Wastewater Treatment facilities. Alberta Environment and Parks continues to work diligently to provide clear and concise information to operators and system owners.

- 1) Alberta has recognized that provision of safe drinking water and sanitation services is an essential service. Drinking water and municipal wastewater operational staff are integral in the delivery of these services to Alberta communities. Effective April 9th, they are considered 'essential workers' by the GOA and AEP. The following are links that provide further details on the benefits of this designation.
 - Overview of mitigation required at the business, list of essential services, childcare for essential service workers;
<https://www.alberta.ca/essential-services.aspx>
 - Testing for COVID-19 in Alberta.
<https://www.alberta.ca/covid-19-testing-in-alberta.aspx>

- 2) As the regulator of municipal wastewater systems, that includes collection/conveyance piping and treatment facilities, Environment and Parks is aware that some communities are seeing an increase in homeowners flushing inappropriate items such as disinfectant wipes or paper towels down toilets. We recommend enhanced messaging to your customers regarding the operational problems this poses to wastewater utilities and the potential to create sanitary line blockages, service disruption, and sewer backup. AUMA has endorsed a water industry position on non-flushable and "flushable" labelled products that you can find at the following link:
<https://www.wef.org/link/9c64f53161564a098bfd9cb8d38e51cb.aspx>

- 3) Over the next few weeks, AEP staff will be reaching out to many municipal and industrial wastewater facilities to conduct a short telephone survey to assess the operational status and impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Topics will include: operator staffing levels, status of chemical and PPE inventory, and effluent quality/discharging status.

Please continue to take all precautions possible to minimize the risk of COVID -19 exposure. Follow the advice from public health officials especially any particulars for the critical infrastructure sector. 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) and links herein provided. The following guidance materials will also help you manage your facilities during this COVID-19 pandemic response:

- i. For Municipal and Industrial Wastewater operations: a provincial map is being provided that lists key Compliance, Municipal Approval, and Industrial Wastewater Approval contacts for each region; and
- ii. COVID-19 Guidance for Wastewater Workers that provides information about appropriate control measures.

Drinking water and wastewater systems with EPEA authorizations must still report any contraventions to EDGE (Environmental and Dangerous Goods Emergencies) at 780-422-4505 or 1-800-222-6514 as per regular operations. During this pandemic period, drinking water and wastewater systems must continue to meet their AEP requirements to ensure the delivery of safe drinking water and wastewater 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.

For non-emergency support during normal business hours, please refer to the contacts on your respective (drinking water and/or wastewater) in the contact map provided.

For additional information, please refer to the following documents on COVID-19 pandemic planning for the water and wastewater sector on <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/covid-19-pandemic-planning-for-the-water-and-wastewater-sector-package>:

- **Frequently Asked Questions: COVID-19 – Drinking Water Facilities (April 9)**
<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/d29be391-109b-4afb-80cf-06f7d2a565fa/resource/bdacf440-41cf-4cd7-a5eb-766ddb7ab3/download/aep-covid-19-drinking-water-facilities-faq-2020-04.pdf>
- **Ministerial Order (M.O. 17/2020) (March 31)**
<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/0cc78dea-655e-4a28-8128-5f0310399b74/resource/d26172b7-7109-418c-bfbee9b049076581/download/aep-ministerial-order-17-2020.pdf>

- **Wastewater Sector: Business Continuity Planning for Water & Wastewater Systems (March 26)**
<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/d29be391-109b-4afb-80cf-06f7d2a565fa/resource/ae70562a-d2b0-4520-9a81-9c34a878963e/download/aep-covid-19-pandemic-planning-for-water-and-wastewater-sector.pdf>
- **Alberta drinking water environmental response line (and AEP contacts) (March 26)**
<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/d29be391-109b-4afb-80cf-06f7d2a565fa/resource/7f19960b-641c-4f62-8378-f595d43a13bb/download/aep-drinking-water-contacts-covid-19-2020-03-25.pdf>
- **Conditional Certification during the COVID-19 Pandemic (March 24)**
<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/conditional-certification-during-the-covid-19-pandemic>
- **Guidance for workplaces to reduce risk of transmission, employment standards, employment insurance benefits**
<https://www.alberta.ca/assets/documents/covid-19-workplace-guidance-for-business-owners.pdf>
- **Preventing COVID-19 in the workplace: Employers, employees and essential service workers**
<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/preventing-covid-19-workplace-employers-employees-essential-service-workers.html# Work-related travel for>

Sincerely,



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