

Reasons For Decision  
Water Use Licence MN03-050  
Town of Watson Lake

The Yukon Water Board has concluded its deliberations pertaining to water use application MN03-050, which is an application for a Type A water use licence for a Municipal Undertaking. The applicant is the Town of Watson Lake.

On August 29, 2003, the Town of Watson Lake submitted an application to renew water use licence MN95-001 which was to expire on November 30, 2003. During the period involved in processing the application, receiving interventions, and obtaining the applicant's responses to interventions, licence MN95-001 expired. Accordingly, licence MN03-050 is a new licence rather than a renewal.

Notice of public hearing was provided in accordance with the requirements of the *Yukon Waters Act*. In response, the Board received interventions from:

Government of Yukon, Environment, ("GY")  
Environment Canada jointly with Fisheries and Oceans Canada ("EC")

Neither party expressed an intention to appear and participate in the public hearing and, after considering the interventions and the applicant's responses to them, the Board decided to cancel the public hearing.

These reasons address only those areas where the licence differs significantly from the application and/or the recommendations of the interveners, or where the Board has determined that further elaboration will be helpful.

Environmental Assessment Act

The undertaking was screened in 1993 under the Environmental Assessment and Review Process Guidelines Order (EARP). As no changes to the physical components of the undertaking were proposed in application MN03-050, the EARP screening continued to be applicable and was included in the water use register as exhibit 9.1.

Monitoring and Surveillance

The Board has included a requirement for all water retaining structures to be inspected annually by a Professional Engineer. Although not requested by any party, this has become a standard requirement of the Board.

As recommended by GY and supported by the applicant, the Board has identified the two stormwater outfalls in the monitoring schedule and has expanded the testing parameters from those contained in licence MN95-001 to also include total zinc and total extractable hydrocarbons. The applicant suggested that these should only be tested during spring precipitation events; however, the Board concurred with GY that they should be tested monthly from May to November during precipitation events.

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Studies

GY and EC recommended the inclusion in the licence of a requirement to submit a groundwater monitoring plan for the area down gradient of the sewage treatment lagoons within 6 months and to a system installed within 12 months. The stated objective was to assess potential impacts to the Laird River. The applicant agreed with the concept of an assessment but disagreed with GY's and EC's approach of proceeding directly to the installation of a monitoring system. Instead, the applicant proposed that a study be carried out that would first assess the potential for impacts to surface waters. The results of the study would then be used to develop recommendations for further steps. The Board concurred with the applicant's proposed approach and has included a requirement for a study to investigate and assess the potential environmental impacts of the operation of the long-term storage lagoon on local groundwater quality and on the Laird River. The study is to include several components, including the development of recommendations for additional work.

*Bruce Chambers*

Bruce Chambers, Vice Chairperson  
YUKON WATER BOARD

June 3, 2004