

Media Release

Construction Underway on \$325.6 million Renewal of the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant

Mon., July 18, 2022 – Today, the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Corporation (BPWTC) celebrated the early stages of construction on one of its most significant infrastructure renewal projects in the last 30 years.

The Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant (BPWTP), originally commissioned in 1955, plays a critically-important role in supplying potable water to more than 260,000 people in the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, along with residents of southwestern Saskatchewan – nearly one quarter of the province’s population.

“The renewal of the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant has been a long time coming. The staff at the plant have done an incredible job of keeping this plant operating effectively. That work, however, is becoming increasingly difficult as the plant begins to age beyond its projected lifespan. I want to commend plant staff for all they have done over the past number of years to keep this plant running effectively for the residents of the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, and surrounding regions. I also want to thank the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, the Government of Saskatchewan and the Government of Canada for supporting this important project,” said Dale Schoffer, Board Chair, BPWTC.

The renewal project will upgrade the main treatment plant, treatment processes and treatment technologies, as well as modernizing the facility with necessary redundancy. It will rejuvenate the plant, enabling it to meet the region’s forecasted potable water demands for the years ahead. Construction began in June on the project. Work to date includes construction on temporary roads and lay down areas, the start of new summer ponds, relocation of a natural gas line, initiation of chemical tank refurbishment, and the start of various underground services. The plant renewal project is expected to be completed and fully operational by the end of 2025.

“Hundreds of thousands of Saskatchewanians rely on the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant and the workers who maintain and operate it. This major infrastructure renewal, the result of a strong partnership between federal, provincial and municipal governments, will ensure the citizens of Regina, Moose Jaw, and several other communities have access to reliable, potable water services for decades to come,” said the Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Infrastructure and Communities.

“The Government of Saskatchewan is proud to play a role in this important water infrastructure project by investing more than \$74 million in provincial funding toward the renewal of the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant. Once this project is completed, businesses and residents in Regina, Moose Jaw and surrounding region will be better positioned for growth for this new decade and far beyond,” said Mr. Lyle Stewart, Lumsden-Morse MLA, on behalf of the Honourable Don McMorris, Saskatchewan’s Minister of Government Relations.

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"This renewal project will enhance the environmental sustainability of the facility and implement the use of renewable energy to help operations run more efficiently while ensuring our residents continue to have safe reliable drinking water. This project would not be possible without the contributions from the federal and provincial government as we are grateful for their support of the project," said Her Worship Sandra Masters, Mayor of the City of Regina.

"It gives me great pleasure to be a part of this exciting announcement. Our City Council recognizes the critical nature of the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant renewal, and we thank the Government of Canada, the Government of Saskatchewan and the City of Regina for their partnership to make it happen," said His Worship Clive Tolley, Mayor of the City of Moose Jaw. "The renewal project will rejuvenate the plant to meet the potable water demands of our customers. Moose Javians and surrounding communities can be assured that we will continue to have safe, reliable, high-quality drinking water for many years to come."

"This is a very exciting project. We want to thank all levels of government for their support which has enabled this plant renewal project to proceed. The plant has provided safe, reliable, quality water to the province's residents for more than 65 years. We anticipate this renewal project will enable it to continue to provide that resource to provincial residents well into the future," said Ryan Johnson, CEO, BPTWC.

The approximate cost of the BPWTC Renewal Project is now \$325.6 million. Under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP), the Government of Canada is contributing more than \$89.13 million toward the project and the Government of Saskatchewan is providing more than \$74.26 million. BPWTC, owned by the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, is funding the remaining \$162.2 million.

In May 2022, BPWTC was approved by the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw to obtain additional financing to fund an increase in original project cost of \$252.8 million due to the COVID-19 pandemic, supply chain issues, the war in Ukraine, inflation and other factors.

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Backgrounder

- The Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Corporation (BPWTC) is a non-profit corporation, governed by an independent Board of Directors. The corporation was formed in January 2016 through the Unanimous Membership Agreement by the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, which have jointly owned the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant (BPWTP) since its inception.
- BPWTP was commissioned in 1955 following extensive work with the federal and provincial governments, along with the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw. The plant draws water from Buffalo Pound Lake, a shallow man-made reservoir on the Qu'Appelle River. Water levels in Buffalo Pound Lake are maintained by the release of water from the Qu'Appelle Dam on Lake Diefenbaker.
- BPWTC's mission is to provide a reliable and affordable supply of safe, high-quality drinking water which meets the needs and expectations of consumers in the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, and surrounding regions.
- The corporation currently supplies water to the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, SaskWater, and the Buffalo Pound Provincial Park, which supply water to many communities in the region, extending as far west as Mortlach, as far east as Sedley, as far south as Briercrest and as far north as Bethune. In total BPWTC supplies water to 260,000 people.
- The plant has been a leader in the delivery of high-quality drinking water. It has received numerous Water Quality Awards and has made significant progress in improving the quality of water provided to its customers. It was one of the first plants in Canada to pioneer the use of the Granular Activated Carbon filtration process for the removal of algae-produced taste and odour in the 1980s. The corporation's quality water successes are due in large part to the water treatment expertise of its employees.
- BPWTP has undergone three major capacity and process improvements since its original construction.
- Last upgraded more than 30 years ago, BPWTP has now reached the end of its useful life. Water treatment plants typically require a major refurbishing every 25 to 30 years.
- The plant is in need of upgrading and renewal to ensure the continued delivery of sufficient high-quality water to its customers. Aged infrastructure, a lack of redundancy, dated technology, evolving regulatory requirements, and operating systems with limited controls to address a poor and variable source of raw water, are all challenges that are faced by the current plant, and will be addressed by its upgrades.
- In 2018, the Government of Canada and the Government of Saskatchewan committed a combined more than \$20.58 million in funding under the New Building Canada Fund for upgrading of the electrical systems, and provision of back up power at BPWTP.

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- In June of 2020, the corporation announced the awarding of the Plant Renewal Design Contract.
- On June 8, 2021, the Government of Canada committed to investing more than \$89.13 million and the Government of Saskatchewan committed to providing more than \$74.26 million toward the renewal project, under the Investing In Canada Infrastructure Program. BPWTC, owned by the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, is responsible for any additional costs.
- The Plant Renewal Project will work to ensure the viability of the water treatment Plant for at least the next 25 years, and to ensure the corporation is able to meet its mandate long into the future.
- The renewal project is a substantial renovation of the water treatment plant, which will include some renovations and new construction, with the intent of re-using as much of the existing facilities and infrastructure as possible.
- The renewed BPWTP will:
 - help to address the challenges associated with using current systems to treat the growing range of raw water conditions in Buffalo Pound Lake,
 - help to prevent loss of water supply to the cities,
 - address the dated water treatment technologies,
 - mitigate the risk of treatment process failure due to aging infrastructure,
 - address the plant's current lack of redundancies,
 - enable the plant to meet environmental regulatory requirements,
 - enable the plant to meet occupational health and safety requirements,
 - enable the plant to address regulatory requirements into the future,
 - increase the capacity of the plant to meet future demands, to 2050,
 - enable and support residential and economic growth in the region serviced by the corporation, and
 - enhance the plant's environmental sustainability, by reducing its carbon footprint and implementing the use of renewable energy.
- By addressing the plant's issues, identified above, the renewal project will fulfill the corporation's mandate for generations to come.
- BPWTP is approximately 30 kilometres northeast of the City of Moose Jaw along Highway 301, 17 kilometres north of the intersection with Highway 1.