



Background: Excess phosphorus is the cause of potentially harmful algae blooms on Lake Winnipeg, which have been increasing in size and frequency in recent years.

Winnipeg's North End Water Pollution Control Centre (NEWPCC) is the single largest point source of phosphorus to the lake. It releases an average of 600 kg of phosphorus every day. This is over three times the 1 mg/L phosphorus limit prescribed in the plant's provincial operating licence, which was first issued under Manitoba's Environment Act in 2005. The current NEWPCC licence is set to take effect on Dec. 31, 2019, though city officials have estimated that full plant upgrades will not be complete for at least another 10 years.

In January 2019, recognizing that the current licence deadline would not be met, Manitoba Conservation and Climate asked the city to submit a notice of alteration to its NEWPCC licence. The notice of alteration was to include a revised plan for full compliance with licence conditions, as well as interim measures to reduce phosphorus loading in advance of full plant upgrades.

In July 2019, city officials submitted the notice of alteration to the provincial regulator. They asked for two additional years to develop a licence compliance plan and to test interim phosphorus-removal solutions. No dates for compliance were provided.

In October 2019, Winnipeg City Council directed the Water and Waste department to begin testing interim phosphorus-reduction measures. However, no concrete deadlines are provided to complete this testing, which will be done in a lab. Best-case estimates suggest some phosphorus reduction could be implemented at the NEWPCC by late 2022; this will depend on funding and construction schedules.

The provincial government is currently reviewing the City's request to determine whether to grant the two-year extension – and whether to attach conditions to any extension granted.

Join us in speaking out: Contact Manitoba's Minister of Conservation and Climate, as well as your MLA. Remind them that, as the provincial regulator, they have a responsibility to ensure the City of Winnipeg addresses the NEWPCC's impact on Lake Winnipeg.

Here's an example of an effective letter you can send to the minister and your MLA:

"I am reaching out today on an issue that matters deeply to me: the impact of the North End Water Pollution Control Centre (NEWPCC) on the health of Lake Winnipeg.

I am greatly troubled to know that Winnipeg's under-treated sewage is the single largest point source of phosphorus to Lake Winnipeg. Excess phosphorus is causing potentially harmful algae blooms on Lake Winnipeg, the 10th largest freshwater lake in the world. I own a cottage on this beautiful lake and have seen firsthand the algae blooms that plague its waters every summer.

I understand Manitoba's government is currently reviewing a request to extend the NEWPCC's licence deadline so that city officials can develop a compliance plan for full plant upgrades and review interim phosphorus reduction options.

As regulator, the provincial government has a responsibility to ensure the City of Winnipeg addresses the NEWPCC's impact on Lake Winnipeg. Recognizing that the NEWPCC licence was first issued over a decade ago in 2005, and that, in 2019, the city has indicated it will be at least another 10 years before full plant upgrades are complete, I urge you to ensure that any licence amendments granted by the province include:

- *A requirement for interim phosphorus removal to accelerate the achievement of the 1 mg/L phosphorus limit;*
- *A firm deadline for implementation of interim phosphorus removal measures; and*
- *Clear consequences for non-compliance.*

Please reply to let me know where you stand on this issue.

*Sincerely,
Your name"*

Remember to customize your comment as much as possible, and aim to be clear and concise with your message.

Email Conservation and Climate Minister Sarah Guillemard at: mincc@leg.gov.mb.ca

Or mail a letter to Minister Guillemard at:

Room 227 Legislative Building
450 Broadway
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0V8

Contact information for all MLAs can be found at:

https://www.gov.mb.ca/legislature/members/mla_list_alphabetical.html