

## **South Hazelton Water System Upgrade**

Project Completion Update – March 2013

## **Project Background**

At the request of the South Hazelton Waterworks District, the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine worked with the Waterworks District and consulting engineers Stantec, since 2001 on how best to upgrade the community water system.

The South Hazelton Water System was out of compliance with the BC Drinking Water Protection Act Regulation and had been on a Boil Water Advisory since 1998 as a result of sporadic water quality and a reoccurring presence of potentially harmful bacteria in the system. The potential for parasitic organisms such as giardia and cryptosporidium was also a concern.

The Waterworks District had been under order since 2003 to comply with Provincial Drinking Water Regulations and to install a suitable disinfection treatment system. The Ministry of Health had ordered the South Hazelton Waterworks District to treat the Chicago Creek source or use an approved alternative.

An engineering feasibility study completed in 2002 looked at the various options available to improve the South Hazelton Water System including the viability of connecting to the Village of Hazelton or the District of New Hazelton system. It was determined that the most practical and cost effective solution was to upgrade the existing South Hazelton System-keeping Chicago Creek as the water source.

In addition, the South Hazelton water system did not meet minimum fire flow requirements set out by the Fire Insurers Underwriters. As a result, the community was also at risk of higher fire insurance rates.

In 2003, in consultation with the public and at the request of the South Hazelton Waterworks District, the Regional District applied for a Canada/BC Infrastructure Grant. Waterworks Districts are not

eligible to receive these types of infrastructure grants and if a grant was secured, the water system assets and responsibilities would need to be turned over to the Regional District.

A Canada/BC Infrastructure Grant was approved in 2003 for \$373,000 followed by an additional \$343,860 grant in 2004.

As a condition of the senior government grants, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was required. This EA took into consideration water resources, fisheries habitat, geology, land use, vegetation, wildlife, heritage resources, potential environmental impacts, preventative and mitigation measures and First Nation consultation. It concluded that this project wasn't likely to cause significant environmental effects provided specific mitigation measures were implemented including requirements for the Regional District to continue meeting with the House of Nikat'een to confirm First Nations interests and use of the area for traditional purposes. The EA was completed and the release of grant funding was approved.

A further \$1,135,000 Build Canada Grant was also secured in 2009 and the scope of the intended project was changed to include UV Treatment. UV Treatment was identified by the Ministry of Health as a requirement. Since then, an additional \$800,000 from the Canada/BC Community Works Fund was committed to the project.

An open house was held in July 2009. The purpose of the open house was to explain the project proposal, answer questions and confirm community support. The presentation outlined the major works required to improve water quality, reliability and fire protection. Residents were encouraged to attend this meeting to learn the costs and impact of these changes. Representatives from the Waterworks District, Regional District, Northern Health Authority and Stantec were present.

The presentation also included the requirement to dissolve the Waterworks District and turn over all assets and responsibilities to the Regional District to manage on behalf of the community, including water, fire and park services.

Following the Open House, the Waterworks District was dissolved and the construction contracts awarded. The Project consisted of water intake upgrade, infiltration gallery improvements, the construction of the water disinfection facility, including power and communications systems, access road upgrade to the disinfection facility, along with two reservoirs for domestic and firefighting purposes.

The value of the Project since 2003 is approximately \$3,750,000 and the cost to the service area is offset by \$2,651,860 in grants and \$400,000 from the Waterworks District's Reserve Fund. The balance, in the order of \$700,000, will be funded by long term borrowing over 15 – 20 years paid for by the South Hazelton community through a parcel tax, and annual user fees. The Fees and Charges associated with the South Hazelton Water System will include an annual parcel tax of \$500 per parcel and an annual user fee of \$300. These charges are in line with the projections provided to the community in 2009.

The District of New Hazelton operates and maintains the South Hazelton Water System on behalf of the Regional District and a long term arrangement is under development. The District of New Hazelton should be contacted if you have any questions or concerns regarding water pressure, water quality, lack of water, water leaks or emergency water service shut-offs.

District of New Hazelton – Phone: 250-842-6571 AFTER HOUR EMERGENCY call: 250-842-6571 and press "1" to be connected to answering service.

Please contact the Regional District for requests and inquiries regarding:

- Scheduled Water Service Shut Offs and Water Service Turn On.
- Billing, water rates and regulations.
- New connections to water systems such as a newly created lot or a lot that has never been connected to the water system.

In February 2013, with the completion of the water system upgrade and final clearance from Northern Health Authority, the boil water advisory was lifted. Although the water has been treated for a number of months now and met water quality requirements, it took time for the water quality throughout the system to remain consistent. Residents can now expect insurance premium discounts for fire protection to be maintained.

An Open House will be hosted to provide residents with an overview of the project. Regional District staff will be on hand with other appropriate personnel, including the project consultant with Stantec, to answer questions from the community.

## **Open House**

Wednesday April 17, 2013
Starting at 7:00 pm
Mount Rocher Church
2060 Broadway Avenue

This community meeting is to provide the South Hazelton residents with an overview of the project.



## Regional District of

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Harry Nyce – Chair, Regional District Board Linda Pierre – Director, Electoral Area B

