

# Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte First Nation

## Tribal Council Report Phase II - Executive Summary

### Introduction

The Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) was retained by the Ontario First Nations Technical Services Corporation (OFNTSC) to carry out an overall general assessment study of existing water and sewage facilities in First Nation communities with regard to the magnitude and scope of existing and potential problems in terms of health and safety risks.

In March 2001, a representative from OCWA traveled to the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte community and met with the facility operator. At the community visits, Tom Northardt from OFNTSC (Toronto) was also in attendance.

From interviews with the operator and the completion of questionnaires, information was collected by OCWA and compiled into a Community Report, included in Appendix "A". At the time of the visit, walkthrough tours of the facilities were conducted by OCWA and observations were recorded in the report. This First Nation Report summarizes the findings from the Community Report.

### Community Services

The Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte community is generally located 10 km east of Belleville on Hwy. 2. Based on the Capital Asset Inventory System (CAIS) and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) reports, the total on-site Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte population amounts to 1,908, and there are 718 houses of which:

- 220 houses (30.9%) are serviced by two communal water systems, 492 houses (68.5%) are serviced by individual wells, 5 houses (0.7%) are serviced by individual water holding tanks, and the remaining 1 house (0.1%) is serviced by other means; and
- 202 houses (28.2%) are serviced by a communal sewage system, 515 houses (71.7%) are serviced by individual septic tanks, and the remaining 1 house (0.1%) is serviced by other means.

The water treatment facility in the Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte (Airport) community is a Class I facility.

### Risk Assessment

It was reported that the airport water system is on a permanent Boil Water Advisory.

OCWA's assessment identifies the airport communal water supply as a high risk because it is not designed for residential use and has a permanent Boil Water Advisory. The water and sewage systems that are connected to the Town of Deseronto have been classified as low risk. The sewage collection system is ranked as medium risk because the pumping stations have backup power and there is no safety equipment.

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## **Definition of Risk**

High-risk issues can include non-compliance events, broken or malfunctioning equipment, lack of necessary monitoring equipment, inadequate sampling/testing/reporting, safety issues, and lack of operator training. These items should be acted on immediately.

The report also identifies medium risk issues that should be attended to in the short term. These issues include record drawings and manuals, and backup power supplies.

Long-term planning objectives have also been identified in the report. These objectives are to ensure that a support structure is put in place to, not only bring the facilities into compliance with approved operating standards, but also through operator training, testing and reporting protocols, planning and capital improvements, to maintain that level of operational excellence. This approach will ensure the long-term health and safety of both the community and the operators, while also maintaining the value of the capital assets.

## **Recommendations**

The report recommends immediate action be taken on the high-risk issues with attention being given to the medium risk issues. Concurrently, the long term planning issues should be formulated and implemented.

From OCWA's observations in the community, it is recommended that consideration be given to further studies of the water distribution systems and the sewage collection system. In addition, the individual water wells, septic systems and other service means should also be reviewed on a continuing basis.

The information available through the CAIS and INAC reports was found to be not up to date and/or in agreement. It is recommended that these reports be updated and reconciled.

The foremost recommendation would focus on operator training programs together with a reporting structure to ensure both operating compliance and effective response to changing conditions.