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Aboriginal Affairs and
Northern Development Canada
<http://www.aandc-aadnc.gc.ca>

Affaires autochtones et
Développement du Nord Canada
<http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca>

North Mackenzie District
P.O. Box 2100
Inuvik, NT X0E 0T0

Telephone: 867-777-8900
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September 22, 2011

Hamlet of Aklavik
P.O. Box 88
Aklavik, NT X0E 0A0



Attn: Evelyn Storr, Senior Administrative Officer

RE: Spill #11-205, Emergency Release of Sewage

Dear Ms. Storr,

It is understood that an emergency release of sewage occurred between May 21-23, 2011 due to flooding and the access road to the sewage lagoon being washed out. The release was made to the Peel Channel of the Mackenzie River approximately 1 km downstream from the community and airport. While the spill was inspected and subsequently closed there remains further concerns about the circumstances surrounding this incident.

The time period this was last known to have occurred was on May 26, 2006. While the circumstances surrounding the flooding and the state of emergency that puts the Hamlet in are understood there continues to be responsibilities under the Water Licence that need to be addressed. When an emergency release of sewage is imminent there needs to be call in without delay to NWT 24 hr Spill Report Line and to the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada – North Mackenzie District Office (AANDC-NMDO) specifically the Water Resource Officer.

Detailed records must be kept of this incident for the Spill Report Line and for the purposes of the Water Licence. There needs to be an accounting of the circumstances, such as why the Hamlet of Aklavik was needing to discharge sewage in a location other than their approved Sewage Disposal Facilities and details on how many truckloads of sewage have been discharged. It is important to contact the AANDC-NMDO to ensure there are no concerns or issues surrounding an emergency release of sewage. This also enables the regulator to stay informed of such an event and be able to relay information when the time comes in addition to providing any assistance to the Hamlet and their staff.

Currently there are no known mitigative measures or procedures to deal with flooding and its affect on the Hamlet using the Sewage Disposal Facilities. It is with this issue there needs to be further discussion, planning and preparation. It is recommended that



there be measures in place to be prepared and procedures ready to mitigate any flooding and possible emergency discharges.

It is recommended there be both administrative and physical controls and preparations. For example there should be a state of water conservation which would facilitate a decreased demand for sewage hauling. The residents can decrease their use of water so as to lessen the amount of sewage the Hamlet generates during times of flooding and emergency sewage discharge. Additionally when instances of highwater are evident and flooding is imminent there can be an effort to empty the communities sewage tanks more often to enable a larger storage capacity for when it is needed.

From a physical standpoint the Hamlet can obtain sewage tanks and/or storage tanks to enable a greater degree of storage capacity. For example there are a number of sewage tanks at the Solid Waste Disposal Facility that could be refurbished or retro fitted and stationed in an area to create extra sewage storage capacity. If there is a problem with the road being inaccessible there can be improvements made to municipal road infrastructure to enable their usage during flooding events.

Currently the Hamlet discharges sewage during a flood to a non specific or unprepared area by the river. There can be a designated emergency discharge area consisting of retention berms or even a trench which would allow some primary treatment of sewage during emergency discharges before it goes to the river.

There are any number of things that the Hamlet of Aklavik can do to prepare for flooding and mitigate the need for an emergency discharge of sewage. The very least of which can be decreasing the amount of sewage the community generates and needs to discharge. There are specific steps that the Hamlet can do to be prepared and decrease its impact on the environment during flooding and emergencies.

The AANDC-NMDO looks forward to working with as much as possible to make preparations and plan for the next time an emergency discharge of sewage is needed. If you have any questions/concerns regarding the enclosed, and/or if additional information is required, please do not hesitate to contact me at (867) 777-8909.

Sincerely,

Jan Davies
Water Resource Officer

Cc: Conrad Baetz, District Manager, North Mackenzie District, Inuvik, NT
Freda Wilson, Office and Finance Administrator, NWTWB, Inuvik, NT