



Conservation and Water Stewardship

Environmental Compliance and Enforcement

- 1) How many municipal wastewater systems (lagoons and treatment plants) are located in the Fisher River watershed? Are any of these systems at or near capacity? Have there been any emergency discharges?

A total of two (2) wastewater treatment lagoons are present within the boundaries of the watershed: Fisher Branch and Pine Dock, both of which are Small Class Treatment facilities. There are no wastewater treatment plants. This assessment does not include any facilities that may be present on First Nation lands as these are not under our jurisdiction.

The Fisher Branch lagoon discharges to the Broad Valley Drain which connects directly to the Fisher River. The Pine Dock lagoon discharges to a drain running alongside PR 234 which discharges into Lake Winnipeg.

The Fisher Branch lagoon is near capacity most years and has experienced issues with emergency discharges in the past. The Pine Dock lagoon is a relatively new facility that appears to be operating properly.

- 2) Can you provide a list of all public and private wastewater treatment facilities in the watershed along with their treatment classifications and installation dates?

There is one privately-owned domestic lagoon and one privately-owned livestock lagoon located within the watershed. There are numerous privately-owned on-site wastewater management systems (OWMS) which are typically septic fields. Due to the nature of the OWMS Regulation and limitations of the filing system, the exact number cannot accurately be estimated. Essentially, any dwelling that is not connected to a central sewer, likely has a septic field system. Some older residences may still be using sewage ejector systems. These systems, while no longer permitted to be installed since 2009, are not outlawed; their continued existence and use are allowed.

- 3) How often are private waste water systems inspected to ensure that they are adhering to their environmental licenses and provincial regulations?

Private wastewater systems are not typically inspected after the mandatory inspection that occurs at the time of installation. Systems are subject to inspection based on complaints, and in some instances, during the course of special inspection programs.

- 4) What adaptation tools or activities can residents of the watershed adopt to prepare for climate change and variability?

In order to prepare for climate change, residents should be aware that conditions that may have existed for many decades may be in the process of changing. While it is unknown how these changes will manifest, some predictions indicate that weather patterns will become more extreme. Areas that may have had some high

water problems in the past may demonstrate more frequent and more severe flooding than in the past. Droughts may become more prolonged. Diversified practices and contingency plans based on possibilities of extreme events should be considered, especially for properties in areas subject to periodic issues relating to water management.

- 5) What is the process for assessing the environmental impacts of developments? Is there a process to re-assess impacts of a development or are they able to continue operations status quo for years to come?

Depending on the nature of the development, there are a number of different processes for assessment. At the most simple level, on-site wastewater management systems are evaluated by staff at Manitoba Conservation for their comparative effectiveness and approved or rejected based on research completed. These systems go on to an inspection by Environment Officers as they are installed to ensure installation standards and compliance.

More complex projects such as wastewater treatment lagoons and wastewater treatment plants require a review and Environment Act licensing by engineers in the Environmental Approvals section of Manitoba Conservation. These reviews, and the conditions contained within the licences, ensure that certain specified operating conditions are met. Some licences require submission of monitoring data and, in some cases, re-inspection of the facility on a regular basis. As with on-site wastewater management systems, licensed facilities are also subject to inspection and review in the event that complaints or concerns are received by the local Enforcement and Compliance office.

- 6) Are lagoons at intensive livestock operations monitored for seepage to groundwater?

All livestock manure lagoons in the Fisher River watershed are monitored for groundwater seepage. The Livestock Manure and Mortalities Management Regulation requires producers with 300 or more animal units of any one species of livestock to submit annual analytical results from samples of the drinking water provided to their livestock. This helps to ensure that any leaks are identified in a timely manner. Facilities are inspected at least every three years.

- 7) What is the process of notification for emergency discharges?

The process for notification for emergency discharges is for the licence holder to contact the local environment officer with the request. The request is reviewed and forwarded to the Director, who may issue a suspension of the clause in the licence to allow discharges outside of the regular time period designated for discharging.

- 8) Local accounts indicate there have been emergency discharges in the RM of Fisher in the past decade. Is there anything on record of this?

Past emergency discharges from the Fisher Branch lagoon occurred most recently in 2006. There does not seem to be a problem with recurrence in this regard.

- 9) What are special inspection programs for private waste water systems? Can you provide an example?

There has been an Enhanced Inspection Program for onsite wastewater management systems in the past. These were door-to-door inspections to ensure that septic fields were not leaking and that there were no problems with systems. Unfortunately, this program is not currently operating. Inspections of existing septic systems are conducted only on a complaint basis. Proximity to watercourses is regulated (under the current regulation) and cannot be less than 30m from the bank of a watercourse. Regulation is undertaken at the time of installation to ensure that systems meet all setback requirements. Failing fields are re-inspected on a complaint basis only. Also, due to the process whereby OWMS are registered, not all existing systems are registered. There are very few systems older than 1997 that are on the books.

10) What are the fines for illegal dumping? How is enforcement for illegal dumping conducted?

Under the Litter Regulation (M.R. 92/88), fines are \$199.80 for individuals, and \$2470.65 for corporations. Enforcement of this regulation is only possible if complaints are received or if an officer discovers a situation. There is no regular program for inspection.

11) How are landfill operations and transfer sites regulated?

Class 2 and Class 3 Landfills, and Transfer Stations are regulated under the Waste Disposal Grounds Regulation (M.R. 150/91). Class 1 Waste Disposal Grounds are regulated under the Class of Development Regulation (M.R. 164/88) and require an Environment Act Licence.

12) Is GIS data available for lagoon locations?

GIS data for lagoon locations is available at: https://mli2.gov.mb.ca/environment/kml_files/env_waste_water_sites_pt.kmz. The use of this website requires that the user register with the Manitoba Land Initiative (link for registration available on the main MLI website).

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