

April 9, 2020

To: Alberta Waterworks and Municipal Wastewater Owners and Operators

Pandemic planning and operational challenges for drinking water and wastewater facilities and systems will continue for some weeks or months ahead. That said, I want to thank all of you, your teams and your councils for working together to keep the essential services of drinking water and wastewater running without service disruptions. Your efforts are deeply appreciated and essential for Albertans.

Last week Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) announced a relaxation of regulatory reporting for some activities under EPEA – this does not apply to drinking water facilities. All conditions contained in your operating authorization (Approval or Code of Practice registration) remain as is, and are not affected by last week’s announcement.

Further to my email on March 25, 2020, I want to keep you apprised of AEP’s efforts to help support drinking water (DW) and wastewater (WW) systems during this COVID-19 response phase. During April 3-7, 2020, AEP reached out to DW system owner/operators to complete a telephone survey to capture key baseline information on operator absences and treatment chemical supplies. If your DW system has not yet been contacted by AEP, please contact your regional DWOS (Drinking Water Operations Specialist) or one of the AEP DW contacts listed on the contact map (<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/covid-19-pandemic-planning-for-the-water-and-wastewater-sector-package>). You know your facility operations better than anyone else – but if you have questions or concerns related to your drinking water operations, please contact one of the AEP DW contacts listed. A similar telephone survey of WW systems will be conducted in the next few weeks.

It is imperative that you contact and inform our AEP DW staff, listed on the DW contact map, **before** certified operator staffing or treatment chemical supplies become an EPEA compliance issue (if possible). AEP has implemented a “conditional certified operator” program that could help to provide some emergency facility operator coverage.

Outside of normal business hours (8:30 am – 4:30 pm, Monday-Friday), please call the **24-hr Response Line: 1-800-222-6514 or local line: 1-780-422-4505** if you need to contact AEP staff regarding reportable requirements under your approval or registration, or for any questions or concerns you may have. For example, should you need to contact AEP this Easter long weekend, for either a non-emergency or emergency state, please contact the 24-hr response line. If your system is in contravention or in an emergency state due to loss of operators, lack of treatment chemicals, or unable to

produce and deliver potable water, you must call the **24-hr Response Line: 1-800-222-6514 or local line: 1-780-422-4505** as usual.

AEP is working diligently to provide guidance for your facilities as you navigate through the difficult conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Operators and system owners have asked AEP staff many questions in the past weeks. We have compiled these into a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document with the AEP responses to help give guidance (attached to e-mail).

See attached FAQ sheet.

Please read over the FAQ and share with your operational staff. In addition to the considerations provided in the AEP pandemic planning guide (<https://open.alberta.ca/publications/covid-19-pandemic-planning-for-the-water-and-wastewater-sector-package>), below are some recommended actions:

- i. to support remote access, test your video calling capabilities;
- ii. reach out to neighbouring DW or WW facilities to explore mutual aid;
- iii. contact your chemical suppliers and stay informed of any supply concerns;
- iv. continue to maintain reasonable chemical inventory stockpiles; and
- v. try to avoid unnecessary potential exposures to COVID-19.

In a forthcoming e-mail we will provide an AEP Wastewater Contact Map that will provide contact details to give guidance for municipal and industrial wastewater facilities. Additional materials will also be forthcoming for wastewater systems.

As before, please stay up-to-date on the latest health advice through reliable sources such as [Alberta Health Services \(AHS\)](#), [Health Canada](#) and the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#). Working together as Albertans, we will get through this challenging period in the weeks and months ahead. Stay well.

Sincerely,



Lyndon Gyurek, Ph.D., P.Eng.
Director, Drinking Water/Wastewater/Stormwater
Environment and Parks

Attachments

cc: Scott Milligan, Executive Director, Regulatory Programs
Todd Letwin, Regional Compliance Manager
Craig Knaus, Compliance Manager
Morna Hussey, Drinking Water Program Manager
Okey Obiajulu, Approvals Manager
Debra Long, Drinking Water/Wastewater Programs Specialist