

March 5, 2001

**GREATER VANCOUVER REGIONAL DISTRICT
ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING COMMITTEE
*TERMS OF REFERENCE***

TITLE: Environmental Monitoring Committee

LWMP COMMITMENT C2:

“The District will establish an Environmental Monitoring Committee comprised of members from the District, municipalities, B.C. Ministry of Environment, Lands, and Parks, Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, research institutions, and public (dependent on interest). The committee will be responsible for reviewing the scope and design of monitoring programs, review of monitoring results, predictive modelling, and risk assessments of waste discharges. The committee’s recommendations with respect to upgraded service levels will be considered by the District and member municipalities during an options assessment process”.

PURPOSE:

To provide scientific advice and recommendations on issues relating to liquid waste discharges, their effect on receiving environments and monitoring of the ongoing environmental health of the receiving environment.

To suggest improvements to the LWMP receiving-environment monitoring program through ongoing review of the scope, design, and results of the program. Suggestions will be based on scientific data, information and principles incorporating appropriate cost-benefit consideration of monitoring program approaches.

To review and comment on the monitoring results and their interpretation, including assessment within the context of water quality objectives and other criteria or methods established such as indicator effect levels. Recommend additional criteria if necessary for the assessment of the monitoring results. Review the interpretation of that information to assess whether there is, or is likely to be, a level of effect or change in level of effect such as to provide early warning of the onset of negative environmental impacts.

To identify environmental concerns and to recommend, to the GVRD (and its member municipalities), proposed changes to wastewater management practices. These recommendations would be based on concern about receiving environment health as determined by the monitoring program results, other receiving environment data, modelling results and risk assessment information, and would take into account all applicable legislation.

To facilitate the ongoing exchange of information on environmental monitoring issues.

MANDATE:

The committee's mandate shall be to review the following:

- Environmental monitoring and assessment of receiving environment health and associated water use issues as they relate to waste water treatment plants, combined sewer overflows, sanitary sewer overflows, stormwater discharge sources, and non point sources identified in the plan
- Environmental monitoring and assessment of the receiving environment as they relate to the application of biosolids in the GVRD region
- Identification of monitoring requirements in environmentally sensitive areas and issues of concern in watersheds relating to receiving environment health
- Assessing the effectiveness of current and proposed environmental indicators
- Advising on developments in the science of aquatic environment monitoring
- Evaluating the design of the monitoring program for site-specific needs
- Determining ways to improve the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the monitoring program.
- Recommending sewage effluent and stormwater characterization/trace contaminant/toxicity evaluation studies within the context of assessing receiving environment risk/health
- Monitoring and reviewing discharge character and ambient receiving environment data and objectives in assessing and forecasting the impact of specific discharges
- Recommendations with respect to the risk and options assessment process as outlined in Figure 3 of the Plan

To achieve its mandate the Committee may form subcommittees consisting of its own members, or such additional individuals as required to undertake specific assigned tasks, and will maintain an interface with the Stormwater Interagency Liaison Committee, regularly communicating on stormwater use issues and receiving environment monitoring and assessment activities related to stormwater discharges.

MEMBERSHIP:

The focus of this Committee is the ongoing scientific review of the LWMP's receiving-environment monitoring program. Membership is therefore intended to include scientists with the appropriate expertise. Representation from the municipalities is also essential to the success of this committee. Group membership shall therefore be comprised of municipal representatives, the GVRD, scientists from provincial and federal agencies, scientists from relevant research institutions and potentially a public-at-large member. The Regional Engineers Advisory Committee (REAC) will appoint the Committee Chair.

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PROPOSED GROUP MEMBERSHIP:

Representation on the Committee will be as follows:
Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) - 2 reps
North Vancouver Sewerage Area - 1 rep
Vancouver Sewerage Area – 1 rep
Fraser/Lulu sewerage Area - 2 rep
Institute of Resources and Environment (UBC) – 1 rep
Simon Fraser University – 1 rep
University of British Columbia – 1 rep
MoELP (1 regional and 1 from Victoria)- 2 reps
Ministry of Agriculture and Food – 1 rep
Ministry of Health – 1 rep
Department of Fisheries and Oceans – 1 rep
Environment Canada – 1 rep
Vancouver Port Authority – 1 rep
Public-at-large membership – (dependent on interest)

Recognizing the specialized nature of this committee, municipalities or agencies may appoint corresponding members or have representatives attend for specific items, additional to the representatives listed above, who would receive copies of correspondence, minutes, announcements and other committee related information and who would provide written comments to the committee, but who would not be expected to attend committee meetings. Other representatives of these agencies may also attend on an as-needed basis.

MEETINGS:

The committee shall meet at the call of the Chair. The GVRD shall provide a meeting room. The committee will not have formal votes. Its role is to provide advice to the District (and member municipalities via groups such as REAC). Where consensus is not possible, options for the achievement of a position or goal shall be presented, with the areas of significant disagreement indicated.

Draft minutes of committee meetings will be prepared by the GVRD and forwarded to the committee prior to the next meeting for adoption. Minutes shall reflect issues, discussions, and action items.

FUNDING

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The GVRD will host committee meetings and facilitate the day to day functioning of the committee. Committee requests for funding of workshops or technical studies will be considered by the GVRD.