



Greater Vancouver Regional District
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Chief Administrative Officer
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March 30, 2001

File: CP08-02

Mr. Nick Russo, Inspector
Spill Assessment Biologist
Enforcement and Emergencies Division
224 West Esplanade
North Vancouver, BC
V7M 3H7



Dear Mr. Russo:

I am replying to your letters of March 20, 2001. These letters contained warnings respecting alleged violations of subsection 36(3) of the Fisheries Act at the Iona Island and Lions Gate Wastewater Treatment Plants.

On discussion with staff, I have been informed that at the time of your inspection on February 13, 2001 at Iona Island, a sample of the effluent was collected and was split between Environment Canada and the GVS&DD. The GVS&DD sent its portion of the sample to an independent laboratory, Integrated Resource Consultants Inc. (IRC) for an LC50 test. This test was performed by IRC following the protocols as specified by Environment Canada. The results of this test were an LC50 of greater than 100%. This would appear to not be in agreement with the results that you obtained on the same effluent.

Staff has advised that at a workshop held on March 5, 2001 and attended by Environment Canada representatives, the GVS&DD reported on matters relevant to this letter. At this workshop, a presentation was made that identified (through an independent consultant study) the cause of residual effluent toxicity at the Lions Gate Wastewater Treatment Plant. The toxicants identified were ammonia and Methylene Blue Active Substances (MBAS), consisting of surfactants such as are found in household laundry detergents. The GVS&DD has issued a Request for Proposal for an engineering evaluation to determine how ammonia can be reduced in the effluent and the contract is to be awarded by May 20th. The GVS&DD is also working on developing the capability to undertake MBAS testing on a regular basis. We expect our laboratory to be doing these tests by early May.

We would appreciate the opportunity to review with you the protocols for the test procedure in order to determine whether the apparent failures are real or are an artifact of the test procedure itself.

The GVS&DD intends to continue all reasonable measures to achieve optimal fish bioassay results at Iona Island and Lions Gate.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Johnny Carline', written over the printed name and title.

Johnny Carline
Chief Administrative Officer

cc: Brian Wilson, Director, Environmental Protection Branch, Environment Canada
Guy Martin, Chief, Inspections and Investigations, Environment Canada
Jim McCracken, Regional Director, Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks