



Water Quality Improvement Project

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SEKID must provide Interior Health with alternate project plan

Staff of the South East Kelowna Irrigation recently met with officials from Interior Health to discuss the results of SEKID's failed alternative approval process (AAP). The AAP was used by SEKID to determine community support for a \$15.3 million borrowing bylaw to help fund the district's \$22.3 million water quality improvement project (WQIP). The WQIP is needed to bring the district's potable water up to regulatory standards.

The AAP required ten percent or more of eligible voters to register their opposition to the bylaw to prevent the bylaw from moving forward. With 3,309 landowners eligible to vote, the ten percent threshold required 330 responses. At the closing of the AAP period, October 25, 2012, 1,065 responses were received, representing 32% of eligible voters. This effectively prevents the district from moving forward with the plan as presented.

Interior Health officials have asked SEKID to provide an alternative proposal for implementing the WQIP, without government funding assistance, by November 30, 2012.

"Our original plan called for phasing the project over a ten year period," says board chair, Brian Wright. "The only way we can get those costs down further, without government funding assistance, would be to phase in the project over a much longer period of time."

Wright goes on to say " We are very happy with recent comments from Minister Bennett that SEKID now qualifies for government funding assistance and would much prefer that IH let us see how that plays out over the next few months. We are going to have a very tough time getting community support for moving the project forward without grant funding"

SEKID and all other water suppliers serving more than 500 people are required to meet the *Drinking Water Treatment Objectives (Microbiological) for Surface Water Supplies in BC*. To receive its annual operating permit from Interior Health, SEKID must show that it is working toward meeting these provincial water quality standards and treatment guidelines.

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