

Okanagan Falls Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP)

The new Okanagan Falls WWTP has been processing wastewater since March of 2013. All of the wastewater previously sent to the old treatment plant is now being sent with a lift station to the new treatment plant site. The treatment process removes the organics and nutrients from the wastewater through a process called Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR). The effluent is very highly treated before discharge into the Okanagan River Channel.

The state-of-the art facility replaces the existing facility, located adjacent to a residential area in Okanagan Falls. The old wastewater treatment plant was not able to keep up with the treatment needs and could not meet the ever increasing environmental standards. Additionally one of the biggest issues was the odours created from the solids drying beds.

In February 2010, pre-design for the new WWTP commenced, upon retention of the engineering firm AECOM Canada. The pre-design was presented to the public at an open house in September 2010 and opinions were received. Taking into consideration the response from the public, the design was finalized in July 2011.

The construction of the new works was released to tender and was subsequently awarded to Greyback Construction Ltd. as the general contractor.

Funding for the \$11.7 million facility came from different sources. The project received \$6.2 million in federal provincial funding through the Canada-British Columbia Building Canada Fund, Communities Component in 2010. The remaining contribution is from the residents of the service area through the RDOS.

The treated effluent is used during the process for water maintenance functions and landscape irrigation. The heating and cooling system uses the treated effluent in various ways to provide up to 95 percent of the heating/cooling requirements for the building. Treated effluent is also used in the toilets and many other places around the plant.

On July 3, 2013 the Okanagan Falls WWTP celebrated its grand opening with speeches from dignitaries and tours of the facility for the public. The project has been a community oriented project since the beginning more than a decade ago.

On October 17, 2013 the Southern Interior Construction Association recognized the excellence in design and construction for all the environmental initiatives incorporated into the treatment plant by awarding the treatment plant the Green Award. Representatives from the RDOS, AECOM Canada and Greyback Construction were present to accept the award.