

ACTION UPDATE

Inter-Agency Working Group



Inter-Agency Working Group Update

May 11, 2018

The Ministries of Agriculture and Environment and Climate Change Strategy are working with Splat-sin and other agencies to analyze the recommendations made in the “[From Crisis to Solutions](#)” report. The inter-agency working group is developing a multi-agency action plan that responds to the report recommendations. The plan will be posted to the Hullcar Aquifer Information webpage once complete. Additionally, the aggregated interview responses that informed the “[From Crisis to Solutions](#)” report can now be found on the Hullcar Aquifer web page.

NOTICE: Funding for Nitrate Filter Units

Funding from the Province of British Columbia is available to all independent well users over Hullcar Aquifer 103 impacted by nitrate contamination to install Point of Use (POU) treatment on a domestic tap.

For more information on nitrate filters or to arrange for water sampling, please contact:

amanda.anderson@interiorhealth.ca

(250) 469-7070 Ext 12271 See the notice at:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/site-permitting-compliance/hullcar-aquifer>

Need a PoU Filter?

1. Contact IHA and get your water sampled
2. Contact a Point of Use (POU) treatment system supplier
3. Submit a quote for your selected POU selected system
4. Have the POU installed



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Agriculture Waste Control Regulation Review 2017-18

A number of recommendations in the POLIS Recommendations Report relate to the Agriculture Waste Control Regulation (AWCR). As a result, the ministry issued an Intentions Paper to consult on the proposed changes to the AWCR related to the POLIS Recommendations Report that are being considered for inclusion in a proposed new code of practice under the *Environmental Management Act*. The regulatory review of the AWCR is continuing and it is anticipated that changes to the Regulation will be made in 2018. The Intentions paper and updates are posted on the [Agriculture Environmental Management](#) page.

Ministry of Agriculture: [Post Harvest Nitrate Study 2017-2018](#)

The Ministry of Agriculture conducted another PHNS for the 2017-2018 season for fields overlying the Hullcar Aquifer. Highlights include:

- In the fall of 2017, 39 agricultural fields over or near the Hullcar Aquifer 103 were sampled for a Post-Harvest (Soil) Nitrate Test (PHNT) and compared with 2016 results
- Monitoring the year-to-year trends of post-harvest soil nitrate is useful for improving the efficiency of nitrogen use
- In 2017, PHNT values were high or very high in 5 (or 13%) fields, and low or medium in 34 (or 87%) fields
- In 2016, PHNT values were high or very high in 18 (or 46%) fields, and low or medium in 21 (or 54%) fields
- Additional monitoring is continuing during the period between the 2017 and 2018 seasons of crop growth and more work will be done to determine the usefulness of PHNT for determining the risk of nitrate leaching

The results of this can be found on the [Hullcar Aquifer Information webpage](#).

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Nitrate Sampling

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy has been continually sampling the Steele Springs Water District (SSWD) overflow site. The results from the SSWD overflow are provided in the table to the right.

SSWD Nitrate Results

2017 September — 13.8 mg/L

October — 15.9 mg/L

November — 16.8mg/L

December — 16.8 mg/L

2018 January —16.2 mg/L

March—15.9 mg/L

April—14.2 mg/L

2018 Compliance Update

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy has posted two documents on the [Hullcar Aquifer Information page](#): the Status of Orders issued to Hullcar Agriculture Operations and the 2018 Compliance Plan. Currently, there are four Orders remaining in effect as outlined in the Status of Orders. The compliance plan outlines the frequency of inspections for agricultural producers over the Hullcar aquifer.

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Compliance Issue: Manure on Saturated Soils

The *Environmental Management Act*, which is administered by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy has a regulation regarding the manure issue on agricultural lands.

The **Agricultural Waste Control Regulation (AWCR)** can be found at this link here: http://www.bclaws.ca/Recon/document/ID/freeside/10_131_92

It states under Section 14:

“Conditions unfavorable to application

14 Agricultural wastes must not be applied

- (a) on frozen land,
- (b) in diverting winds,
- © on areas having standing water,
- (d) on saturated soils, or
- (e) at rates of application that exceed the amount required for crop growth,

if runoff or escape of agricultural waste causes pollution of a watercourse or groundwater, or goes beyond the farm boundary.”

The AWCR intentions paper includes changes to this section of the regulation. The proposed changes can be found here (for reference): https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/waste-management/industrial-waste/industrial-waste/agriculture/awcr_review_ip3.pdf

It is not recommended to apply manure on saturated fields, especially in areas where watercourses are close to the field (including drainage ditches) and during the warming periods. The concern is that the runoff will escape and pollute the watercourse, groundwater, or leave the property boundary. If your lagoon is full, you may wish to consider a septic hauler to remove some of the liquid, and/or look towards increasing the lagoon capacity this summer. Placing manure on fields is only recommended for crop nutrient uptake. If the manure is being spread for anything other than crop uptake (i.e. waste disposal), then you would be out of compliance with this regulation and potentially subject to enforcement actions.