



Background

Canadian Water Network (CWN) has undertaken to clarify what leading science and practice tells us about longer-term impacts from urban wastewater and stormwater discharges. The purpose of this initiative is to support discussions and inform decisions on when and where such impacts most warrant management. As an important first step, CWN is convening a workshop on the long-term chronic impacts of urban wastewater and stormwater on receiving water bodies, and the associated relevance for planning, policy, and decision making.

Canadian municipalities and governments are faced with a number of unique challenges at this point in time:

- the need to ensure the resiliency of water systems in the face of extreme weather events;
- uncertainty in the ultimate impact of climate change on the environment and the need to ensure that water management systems can respond to changes that may occur;
- questions on how best to manage environmental impacts from urban wastewater and stormwater, particularly given recent large algal blooms and the identification of previously unrecognized impacts; and
- aging infrastructure that will require repair, replacement, and upgrades in the near future.

Despite these challenges, there are also a number of unique opportunities:

- the understanding of how anthropogenic activities impact the environment has advanced in the past two decades, and this information could be used to inform planning, policy, and decision making;
- wastewater and stormwater systems and management approaches can be modified to manage long-term impacts and prepare for the future as they are upgraded or replaced;
- there is increased public attention and interest on the issue of aging infrastructure and the need for infrastructure renewal; and
- increased federal funding for infrastructure projects.

As municipalities and governments respond to these challenges and opportunities, they are considering how best to not only address immediate-term concerns, but also to achieve sustainable management of water systems and the environment in the long term. This is an opportune time to discuss what is known about long-term impacts from urban wastewater and stormwater and the relevance of this information to planning, policy, and decision making.

CWN Objectives

- To advance discussions in a way that better supports decision makers, academics, and experts in making decisions related to understanding and managing the long-term chronic impacts from wastewater and stormwater discharges, by contemplating the relevance of the current knowledge base for planning, policy, and decision making.
- To articulate key insights emerging from this activity that will inform future discussions on planning, policy and decision making related to the management of long-term chronic impacts from urban wastewater and stormwater.

Workshop Goals

- Refine group understanding of the current state of the thinking on the relevance of long-term chronic impacts from wastewater and stormwater discharges to environmental and public health.
- Identify key considerations and insights that are of most relevance for informing current and future planning, policy and practice decisions.

Pre-Workshop Questions

In preparation for the workshop, we invite all attendees to share your views on the following three questions. Kindly submit a brief written response via email to mspanjers@cwn-rce.ca by **February 3, 2017**. Your responses will help us structure discussions to ensure the workshop is successful and will provide a valuable starting point as we facilitate discussions on February 8-9.

1. From your perspective, do long-term chronic impacts from urban wastewater and stormwater discharges to receiving waters matter? Why or why not?
2. What long-term impacts matter most for environmental and public health? Why?
3. What information and insights on long-term chronic impacts are needed to inform planning, policy and decision making at the municipal, provincial and/or federal levels?

We also ask all attendees be prepared to speak about any information and insights that you or your organization have gathered that could help inform planning, policy, and decision making at the municipal, provincial, and/or federal levels.

Wednesday, February 8		
7:30am - 8:30am	Breakfast provided	Vista A Room
8:30am - 8:45am	Welcome and introductions <i>Bernadette Conant, CWN</i>	Vista B Room
8:45am - 9:00am	Overview of CWN approach and workshop goals <i>Bernadette Conant, CWN</i> <i>Mark Spanjers, CWN</i>	
9:00am - 10:30am	Session 1: Important issues and long-term impacts related to urban wastewater and stormwater discharges <i>CWN facilitated, group discussion</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many potential long-term impacts and issues related to urban wastewater and stormwater discharges to receiving waters. What is the relevance of these impacts to environmental and public health? What impacts are particularly relevant for planning, policy and decision making? • Discussions will focus on identifying what impacts and issues are of particular importance, and why. 	
10:30am - 10:50am	Refreshment break	
10:50am - 12:00pm	Session 1 continues	
12:00pm - 1:00pm	Lunch provided	Vista A Room
1:00pm - 2:30pm	Session 1 continues	Vista B Room
2:30pm - 2:50pm	Refreshment break	
2:50pm - 5:00pm	Session 2: Delving deeper – Considerations and insights for planning, policy and decision making <i>CWN facilitated, group discussion</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Given the impacts and issues identified in Session 1, discussions will focus on important considerations and insights that can help inform current and future planning, policy and decision making. 	
5:00pm	Meeting adjourns for the day	
6:00pm - 6:30pm	Evening reception	Vista A Room
6:30pm	Dinner provided	Vista A Room

Thursday, February 9

7:30am - 8:30am	Breakfast provided	Vista A Room
8:30am - 10:30am	Session 2 continued	Vista B Room
10:30am - 10:50am	Refreshment break	
10:50am - 12:00pm	<p>Session 3: Future opportunities - Where to from here? <i>CWN facilitated, group discussion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the previous discussions, what are the key (top 5) insights and elements of what our science and experience tell us that need to be clearly communicated to the larger community to advance the capacity of policy makers and practitioners to more effectively position and address these issues within their priorities? 	
12:00pm – 1:00pm	Lunch provided	Vista A Room
1:00pm - 2:00pm	<p>Session 4: How and in what areas can advancements of the science knowledge base best support moving decisions forward? <i>CWN facilitated, group discussion</i></p>	Vista B Room
2:00pm - 2:20pm	<p>Final thoughts <i>Bernadette Conant, CWN</i></p>	
2:20pm	Meeting adjourns	