

# CMC Chair's January Update on Proposed Changes to the Otter Lake Landfill

We want to thank all those who participated in the Halifax Regional Municipality's contentious community survey on plans to switch the management strategy at Otter Lake Landfill from prevention to mitigation. The survey results are due to be submitted to the Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change, Jan. 24, 30 days later than originally scheduled.

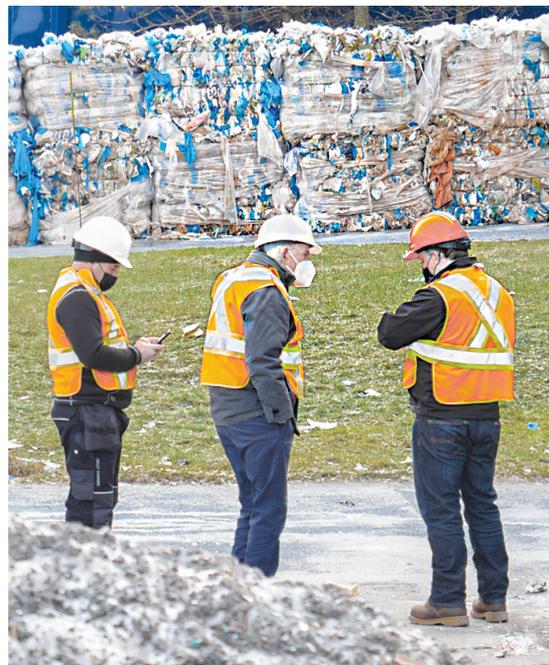
## CMC to Obtain Survey Results

The Community Monitoring Committee, which represents the interests of area residents near the landfill, has been assured by **Andrew Philopoulos**, HRM's director of solid waste resources, that the CMC will receive a timely, full and unredacted copy of the results.

The submission is expected to complete HRM-Mirror Nova Scotia Ltd.'s application for changes to the landfill's operation and start the clock ticking on a 60-day period for the department to render its decision.

## The Issue

HRM, the owner of the landfill, and Mirror Nova Scotia, the operator, want to deactivate the front-end processor and waste stabilization facility (FEP/WSF), which since the landfill's inception, have successfully protected neighbouring communities from flying garbage debris, noxious odours, and surging populations of scavenger birds and rodents that plague other waste disposal sites. The preventive approach was the condition on which area residents accepted the landfill in 1999. The equipment targeted for shuttering keeps all materials banned by the province from going into the landfill. Besides keeping out



Jason Timms, CMC's social media tech expert, left, and Reg Rankin, CMC's executive director, on a recent visit to Otter Lake Landfill with their host, right, Steven Copp, Mirror Nova Scotia's landfill manager at Otter Lake.

untreated organic waste, it also removes hazardous waste and other contaminants along with recyclable materials.

Now the applicants want to rely on mitigation and deal with problems after they arise. Essentially it would turn Canada's only urban landfill into a truck and dump operation, making it like every other landfill in the province, a situation unacceptable to the CMC. Residents in Timberlea, Lakeside, Beechville, Prospect, Hubley and environs could bear the brunt of the proposed change.

## CMC Raised Survey Concerns

CMC raised community concerns about the survey with Tim Halman, Nova Scotia's minister of environment and climate change. As a result, there were some improvements to make it more user friendly, but the overall direction, to produce community consent for the HRM-Mirror Nova Scotia application, remained unchanged. Dillon Consulting, Mirror

Nova Scotia's go-to consultant that developed the report for HRM which justified scraping the FEP/WSF, designed the survey.

## CMC Seeking Agreement Information

In a Dec.10 letter (*downloadable at the [www.otterlakecmc.ca](http://www.otterlakecmc.ca) site under News*), the CMC asked HRM for three items in unredacted form that were blacked out in CMC's copy of the Dec.23, 2015 Agreement for the Operation of the Halifax Regional Municipality's Solid Waste Facilities at Otter Lake, between HRM and Mirror Nova Scotia. Requested are the full text of Appendix D, the FEP/WSF Performance Standards for Mirror Nova Scotia, the short section following the entry on Early Termination, and Appendix A: Fees and Adjustments.

CMC needs the FEP/WSF Performance Standards to carry out its mandated monitoring of landfill operations. It also wants to answer residents' questions on the financial arrangements by which HRM is paying Mirror, effective Jan. 1, 2021, a special \$170 per tonne rate – a \$35.31 increase – for up to 12 months, due to the extended timeline of the HRM-Mirror Nova Scotia application. The terms indicate whatever the result of the application, Mirror will lose its pay bump on or before Dec.31, 2022 and return to its former \$134.69 per tonne fee. If the application fails, Mirror can opt to terminate the agreement. The CMC hopes to be able to shed light on this baffling arrangement soon.

## Stay Informed

Check CMC's Facebook page for more information and the latest developments.

A blue ink signature of Scott Guthrie.

**Scott Guthrie**  
Chair, CMC Board of Directors