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Update on Winnipeg sewage treatment



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Dear LWF supporter,

We have some very frustrating news to share with you.

This week, the City of Winnipeg responded to Manitoba Sustainable Development's request for a revised plan for upgrades to the North End Water Pollution Control Centre (NEWPCC). This sewage treatment plant is the single largest point source of phosphorus contributing to the growth of algae blooms on Lake Winnipeg.

Due July 31, the city's submission was to include "interim options to expediate phosphorus removal" in advance of full plant upgrades. For the past year, LWF and our partners at the International Institute for Sustainable Development have been recommending an [interim retrofit to the NEWPCC](#) that uses a chemical called ferric chloride to remove phosphorus. This retrofit would reduce phosphorus in NEWPCC effluent by 70 per cent, bringing the facility into compliance with its provincial operating licence.

The City of Winnipeg has rejected our proposal. As reported by multiple media outlets, city officials say they will not be pursuing any interim solutions for phosphorus reduction.

We find this response unacceptable. We refuse to believe that no interim options exist.

Many other jurisdictions have been meeting similar phosphorus limits for decades - and Winnipeg must follow suit.

City officials dismissed our proposal, stating that Winnipeg's north end plant cannot handle additional sludge production. However, sludge management infrastructure at the NEWPCC is not currently operating at full capacity, and could be increased significantly with regular repairs and maintenance.

[East side algae July 2019 collage.2 - clockwise top L - Murray, Jennifer, Carter, Laurie.jpg](#)



Algae blooms at Connaught Beach and Lester Beach, July 2019; Photos (clockwise from top left): Murray McCaig, Jennifer Engbrecht, Carter Brooks, Laurie Bennett

Already this summer, [thick algae blooms](#) have polluted the water and coated the shorelines of several eastern beaches. We share the frustration felt by so many lake-lovers. We're tired of delays and excuses.

We are not giving up. We will continue to push the city for the immediate implementation of phosphorus-removal technology at the NEWPCC, and we will be reminding the provincial government of its responsibility, as environmental regulator, to safeguard Lake Winnipeg – and impose consequences for non-compliance.

Please help us by [contacting your city councillor](#) to let them know that inaction is unacceptable. [Visit our website](#) to see an example of an effective submission.

Here is just some of the media coverage of this situation:

[Winnipeg Free Press](#)

[Winnipeg Sun](#)

[CBC Manitoba](#)

[Global News Winnipeg](#)

Thank you for your commitment to Lake Winnipeg,

The LWF team

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