

Langham water plant nears completion

by Christopher Kirkland

While an excess of water in the form of precipitation has caused some unavoidable delays in the construction of the new water treatment plant for the town of Langham, community members can expect to see the plant in operation within the next month. At that time, according to both Town officials and project engineers, the multi-million dollar project will allow residents to enjoy water of comparable quality to that in the city of Saskatoon.

According to Langham town administrator Randy Sherstobitoff, the construction of the new plant is the culmination of over a decade of planning and public consultation. "The plant actually started under construction in January, and we're hoping that by mid-October we'll be switched over and running off the new plant . . . but this has definitely been an ongoing project for a long while. I've

actually been working on this project myself for approximately 10 years. We also looked at SaskWater, and bringing the pipeline that feeds Martensville, Dalmeny, Warman and that area to here as opposed to expanding and building our own system into the aquifer. But we held public meetings, put forward all of the information on both plans, held a public vote, and decided with public backing to go the way we did."

Rather than switch to the SaskWater pipeline, Sherstobitoff explained that Langham chose to remain on a well system, using the latest technology to greatly improve water quality. "There are some changes to processing—the water processes are more modern, we've built in an aeration tower which helps to get rid of some things in the water, and we've got green sand filters and a nanofiltration unit that we've bought and installed. It's sort of like reverse

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Langham water plant is a reality

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osmosis, but the screen sizing is different, the pressures are different, and so on. Along with that, there's a small addition to the reservoir, and that's what we're building. I'm not completely sure, but it's my understanding that this may be one of the largest nanofiltration units to be installed in Saskatchewan to date."

Sherstobitoff stated that the decision to upgrade the plant was made due to the community's desire for a better quality of drinking water rather than any health or safety concerns. "We already were meeting all the regulations with our old plant, so this is an upgrade in aesthetics, and what this is going to do is partly to take away some of the need for water softening, and it's also going to remove more minerals and so on from the water of course.

But the big thing is that the engineers have told me that with this plant, we will have Saskatoon-quality water—as close as you can get to that—by the time we're done.

"That's what people in the community have told us they wanted here—they wanted Saskatoon-quality water, so that's what we're trying to give them."

Sherstobitoff confirmed that a project of such magnitude may well have been beyond the reach of Langham without provincial help. "Start to finish, we're looking at about \$1.7 million. It's a major outlay, but we managed to score an infrastructure grant of approximately \$780,000, which was of course very helpful."

The community as a whole is excited, says Sherbitoff, with citizens and Town officials alike anxious for the plant to begin operation.

"[Construction is] running more or less on schedule now—we did have some problems because of weather conditions this year, and we also had some problems with getting equipment. So originally, we had sort of hoped to be online by the end of June, but with the weather this summer and some equipment problems, we reset that to the end of September, and right now it looks like we should be on target for that."

"We're definitely looking forward to getting the construction stage out of the way, and getting into fine-tuning the plant and producing water."

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It's in the tools

*Give me a lever long enough,
and I shall move the world.*

Archimedes