

## Media Release

# \$4 Million Solar Power Project Unveiled at Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant

**Thursday, June 18, 2024** – The Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Corporation (BPWTC) along with the Cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, today unveiled a \$4 Million Solar Power project at the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant!

The project will power the plant's administration building, enabling the reduction of the Plant's energy consumption by approximately 10%.

"This project is the first of its kind for the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Corporation," said Patricia Warsaba, Chair, BPWTC. "This is a very exciting new initiative because it will play a role in helping the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant to reduce its carbon footprint."

The initiative supports the City of Regina's Energy and Sustainability Framework (Energy and Emissions Reduction Plan), which works to reduce energy use where possible and drastically increase energy efficiency before and while transitioning to renewable energy sources.

"Today marks a groundbreaking moment for our cities as we take a bold step towards a sustainable future. The Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant's solar power project is not just an investment in renewable energy; it's a commitment to our community and the generations to come. By harnessing the power of the sun, we're reducing our environmental impact and leading by example. This initiative reflects our unwavering resolve to make Regina and Moose Jaw shining examples of progress and responsibility," said Regina Mayor Sandra Masters.

The project also aligns well with the City of Moose Jaw's Climate Action Plan, which is a long-term, action-driven plan providing both economic and environmental impacts that will showcase the City of Moose Jaw as a municipal climate change leader.

"The City of Moose Jaw has taken steps to reduce our carbon footprint, and we're excited that a renewable energy source will play a #Notoriously impactful role in Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant operations. We thank the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant team for their continued commitment to the efficient delivery of clean and safe drinking water to Moose Jaw residents," said Moose Jaw Mayor Clive Tolley.

The solar panel installation at the BPWTP is designed to generate 1800 kW of AC power for the facility. The system does not include batteries, and does not feed back into the SaskPower grid, so the solar power will be consumed solely by the BPWTP as it is generated. SaskPower was engaged to review and approve the project and confirm that the solar power generated through the project can be safely integrated into the power system.



BPWTC initiated the development of the solar project in August 2022. The project has used fixed panels that catch sunlight effectively throughout the year. The panels are located on both sides of the approach road to the water treatment plant. It is projected that installation of the panels will be complete in June 2024.

The cost of installation of the solar panels was approximately \$4 million dollars, with an expected project payback within 15 years.

At the media event, BPTWC CEO, Ryan Johnson, also encouraged the residents of Regina and Moose Jaw to incorporate water conservation practices over the summer, as the summer of 2024 is predicted to be very hot.

“We only expect to face water shortages in the event of extreme hot weather in southern Saskatchewan this summer. However, we are encouraging Regina and Moose Jaw residents to regularly practice water conservation because it reduces undue demand on our water supply while it is under construction, and it helps to sustain this important natural resource,” said Johnson.

Johnson points out that while the summer of 2023 was very hot, the plant did not experience any water shortage issues.

However, he is also quick to remind residents that water is a precious resource. He encourages everyone to think about water conservation on a daily basis whether or not the province is dealing with drought and heat conditions.

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## BPWTC Backgrounder

- The Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant (BPWTP) plays a critically-important role in supplying potable water to more than 270,000 people in the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, along with residents of southwestern Saskatchewan – nearly one quarter of the province’s population.
- Work on renewing the plant began in the spring of 2021 and is expected to be complete by the end of 2025.
- The renewal project is upgrading the main treatment plant, treatment processes and treatment technologies, as well as modernizing the facility with necessary redundancy. It is rejuvenating the plant, enabling it to meet the region’s forecasted portable water demands for the years ahead.
- The Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Corporation (BPWTC) is a non-profit corporation, governed by an independent Board of Directors. The corporation was formed in January 2016 through the Unanimous Membership Agreement by the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, which have jointly owned the Buffalo Pound Water Treatment Plant (BPWTP) since its inception.
- BPWTP was commissioned in 1955 following extensive work with the federal and provincial governments, along with the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw. The plant draws water from Buffalo Pound Lake, which is a shallow body of water on the Qu'Appelle River. Water levels in Buffalo Pound Lake are maintained by the release of water from the Qu'Appelle Dam on Lake Diefenbaker.
- BPWTC’s mission is to provide a reliable and affordable supply of safe, high-quality drinking water which meets the needs and expectations of consumers in the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, and surrounding regions.
- The corporation currently supplies water to the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, SaskWater, and the Buffalo Pound Provincial Park, which supply water to many communities in the region, extending as far west as Mortlach, as far east as Sedley, as far south as Briercrest and as far north as Bethune. In total BPWTC supplies water to 270,000 people.
- The plant has been a leader in the delivery of high-quality drinking water. It has received numerous Water Quality Awards and has made significant progress in improving the quality of water provided to its customers. It was one of the first plants in Canada to pioneer the use of the Granular Activated Carbon filtration process for the removal of algae-produced taste and odour in the 1980s. The corporation’s quality water successes are due in large part to the water treatment expertise of its employees.
- BPWTP has undergone three major capacity and process improvements since its original construction.

- Last upgraded more than 30 years ago, BPWTP has now reached the end of its useful life. Water treatment plants typically require a major refurbishing every 25 to 30 years.
- The plant is in need of upgrading and renewal to ensure the continued delivery of sufficient high-quality water to its customers. Aged infrastructure, a lack of redundancy, dated technology, evolving regulatory requirements, and operating systems with limited controls to address a poor and variable source of raw water, are all challenges that are faced by the current plant, and will be addressed by its upgrades.
- In June of 2020, the corporation announced the awarding of the Plant Renewal Design Contract.
- On June 8, 2021, the Government of Canada committed to investing more than \$89.13 million and the Government of Saskatchewan committed to providing more than \$74.26 million toward the renewal project, under the Investing In Canada Infrastructure Program. BPWTC, owned by the cities of Regina and Moose Jaw, is responsible for any additional costs.
- The Plant Renewal Project will work to ensure the viability of the water treatment Plant for at least the next 25 years, and to ensure the corporation is able to meet its mandate long into the future.
- The renewal project is a substantial renovation of the water treatment plant, which will include some renovations and new construction, with the intent of re-using as much of the existing facilities and infrastructure as possible.
- The renewed BPWTP will:
  - help to address the challenges associated with using current systems to treat the growing range of raw water conditions in Buffalo Pound Lake,
  - help to prevent loss of water supply to the cities,
  - address the dated water treatment technologies,
  - mitigate the risk of treatment process failure due to aging infrastructure,
  - address the plant's current lack of redundancies,
  - enable the plant to meet environmental regulatory requirements,
  - enable the plant to meet occupational health and safety requirements,
  - enable the plant to address regulatory requirements into the future,
  - increase the capacity of the plant to meet future demands, to 2050,
  - enable and support residential and economic growth in the region serviced by the corporation, and
  - enhance the plant's environmental sustainability, by reducing its carbon footprint and implementing the use of renewable energy.
- By addressing the plant's issues, identified above, the renewal project will fulfill the corporation's mandate for generations to come.
- BPWTP is approximately 30 kilometres northeast of the City of Moose Jaw along Highway 301, 17 kilometres north of the intersection with Highway 1.