

Scott Point Waterworks District

Annual General Meeting 2019

Report of the Chair

Summary

2018 was another busy year for the Water District. There were few significant operation and maintenance issues and the District did make substantial progress on Project Blend – a project to modify the treatment processes at Wells 1 and 4 to deal with disinfectant by-products in potable water and to modernize our treatment plant equipment.

The Trustees also completed an update of the 10-year financial plan as part of the 2019 budgeting process. Further progress was made in modernizing our accounting software.

I would like to thank my two other trustees for their hard work and time as we navigated these waters. And I would like to thank our contractors: Jean Eastman who is now doing our billing administration work, and the operators at North Salt Spring Waterworks for their diligence in dealing with day-to-day issues.

Operations

There were no major leaks on the system in 2018. The water main appears to be in good shape with little evidence of deterioration of the concrete pipe. The leakage rate was recorded at 13.1%, higher than 2017 and the long-term average. It is believed that water used during treatment modifications is the culprit, but this will be watched carefully.

While there were no leaks on the 50 year-old bare copper service lines between the water main and the water meters in 2018, these continue to be an identified risk. A program will commence in 2019 to pro-actively replace 2-3 service lines and meters per year.

There were a few small leaks reported by individual residents, all found by the monthly meter reading for leak detection. Residents are reminded that damaged lines from the shut-off valve to the house, old toilets, and automatic irrigation systems have an increased probability of being a source of leakage.

There were two instances of significant water consumption in 2018; with both attracting very high water bills. While the additional revenue is welcome, these over-use incidents put significant stress on the aquifer and in one case resulted in temporary loss of the Reservoir volume reserved for fire-fighting supply. These over-use events, while unwelcome and deserving of punishing water tolls, are thankfully rare. The vast majority of residents monitor their consumption and use good conservation practices

Government Regulation

The new Water Sustainability Act requires the District to obtain a license and pay an annual fee for groundwater removal. In 2018, the District received a license without conditions. After the failed referendum, the Province has initiated a study to look at local water district governance – the trustees have expressed a strong interest to be involved.

Treatment for THMs

We have been reporting for several years about the presence disinfectant by-products (DBP), particularly tri-halomethanes (THM) in the water and were put on notice by Island Health in 2015. To address these issues Project Blend was commenced in 2017, and finally completed in early 2019. With completion, we have commenced closer examination of certain quality measures in order to optimize the treatment parameters and meet the goals for THM reduction.

A separate report on Project Blend is provided.

Other Operation Items

An offshoot of Project Blend was that the membranes for the Reverse Osmosis treatment were replaced in 2018, after 14 years of service. While this was planned in the budget, it nonetheless represented a significant expenditure. The new membranes use better materials – this means that less water goes to waste during treatment.

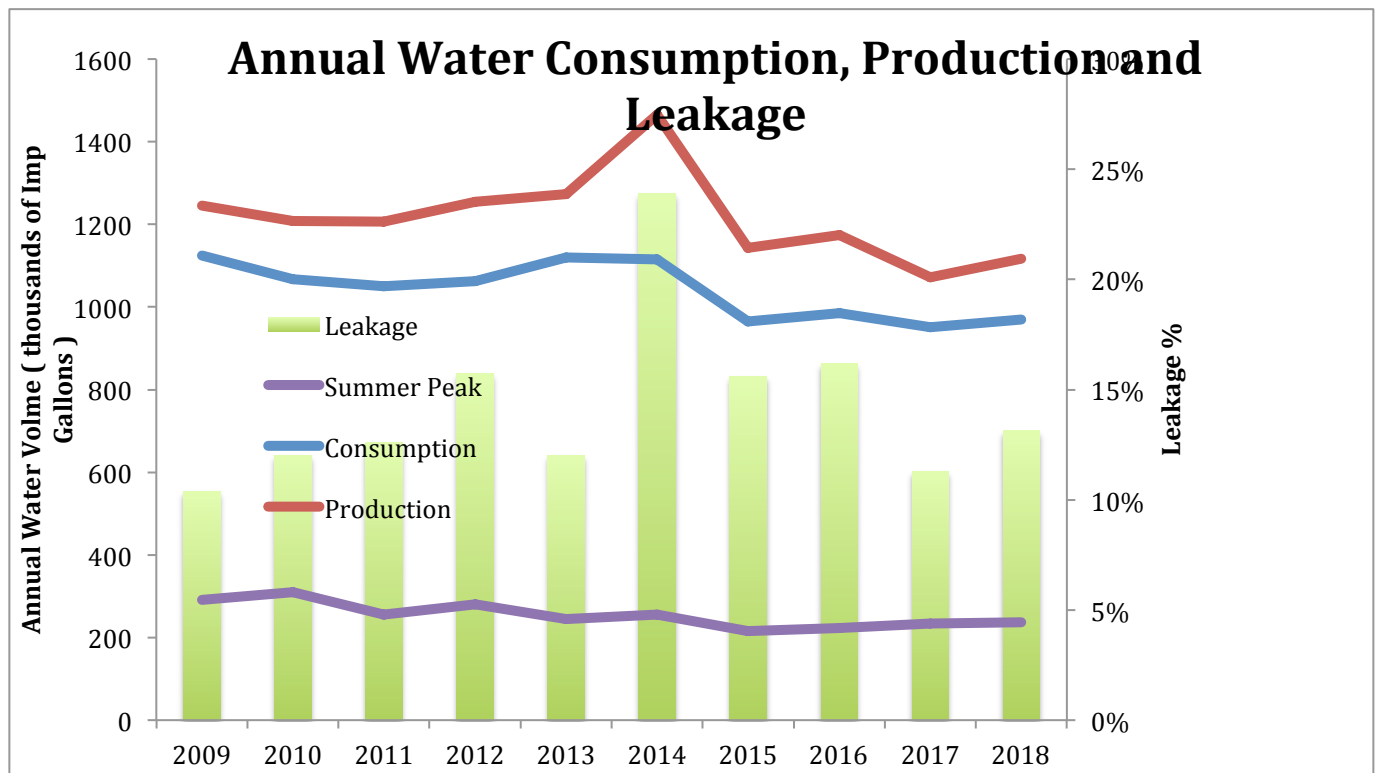
The Reservoir was inspected by remotely controlled submarine in February. The Reservoir is in good shape, but sediment cleaning is recommended. This will proceed in late 2019.

A 7-day power failure occurred from December 20-27, 2018. During this time no water was produced, but system pressure was maintained using the Reservoir, with chlorine levels maintained by manually dosing the Reservoir. This was a good test and shows that with conservation the District can withstand a power outage for a week – long enough to arrange for a temporary generator if that becomes necessary with some future event.

All fire hydrants were serviced in 2018. They will be painted this year.

Water Consumption and Leakage

The total water consumed was 969,968 gallons, a 2% increase from 2017, but still below the 5 year rolling average. The July/August peak period consumption of 237,500 gallons was 1% higher than previous year and just below the 5 year average. Compared to most standards, Scott Point residents are very frugal users with daily water use per household averaging 43 gallons for 2018, compared to guidelines that indicate households are considered to be conservative users at 130 gallons per day.



Backflow Cross Connections

A potential for non-District water to backflow into the system was discovered at a residence in 2018 and the resident was required to install a certified backflow preventer. A survey was sent out to residents known to have the potential for cross-connections. All of the respondents confirmed that there were no connections between private wells or systems and the District. The District asks that all residents with pressure systems or private wells unknown to the District, or pressurized rainwater capture systems, contact the District. If desired, the District can inspect the system to determine whether a cross-contamination potential exists.

10-Year Plan

A comprehensive enterprise risk review was completed in 2017 and a 10 Year Plan approved in 2018. A summary of the process and results of the risk review and the 10 Year Plan to guide future expenditures is available on the website under the Governance tab.

Policy Manual

The Trustees drafted and approved a Policy Manual to formalize many common operating and billing practices. These policies are published on the website under the Admin tab. One policy that may interest residents is the policy on Subdivision, Development and Rental Properties. The essence of this policy is that the District is opposed to, and will take action against, any changes to community plans, zoning, sub-division or activities that will increase the consumption of water on Scott Point. Residents interested in this position should review the policy and make their views known to the trustees.