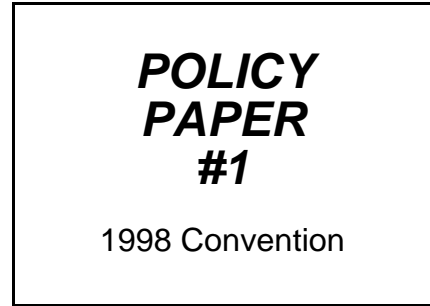


TO: UBCM Members
FROM: UBCM Executive
DATE: August 20, 1998
RE: **1998 ENVIRONMENT ACTION PLAN**



PURPOSE

The purpose of the Environment Action Plan is to:

- identify the major environmental issues that are under consideration;
- describe the current status of the issue; and,
- establish a plan of action.

The plan provides a vehicle for the Environment Committee to report on the activities it has undertaken in the past year and an opportunity for the Annual Convention to approve the directions to be pursued in the upcoming year.

UBCM ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

The Environment Committee performs three basic functions:

- advocates changes in federal and provincial environmental policy to assist local government in solving environmental concerns at the local level.
- represents local government in the development of environmental policy at the federal and provincial level.
- promotes and shares information on solutions to environmental problems which local governments have implemented.

The Committee membership is:

Mayor John Ranta, Cache Creek, Chair
Director Jim Abram, Comox-Strathcona R.D.
Councillor Robert Hobson, Kelowna
Councillor Pat Wallace, Kamloops
Councillor Lynne Kennedy, Vancouver

REVIEW OF ACTIONS

The Committee was consulted on and reviewed a number of legislative, regulatory and policy actions initiated by the provincial and federal government during 1997/98, including the following:

Provincial Government

Legislation

- Waste Management Act - amendments

Regulation

- Sewage Management
- Beverage Containers
- Household Hazardous Waste
- Automotive Recycling
- Septic Tank
- Beehive Burners
- Dam Safety

Consultation

- Greenhouse Gas Forum
- Environmental Assessment Review
- Pesticide Management Policy
- Fish Protection
- Contaminated Sites Implementation
- Water Management Policy - water conservation strategy
- Road Salt and Winter Maintenance

Federal Government

- Endangered Species Legislation

PROPOSED DIRECTION FOR COMING YEAR

The Committee foresees that it will continue to pursue a number of the issues dealt with in the past year.

A) PRIORITY ISSUES

The Environment Committee recommends that the priority issues for the 1998 Environment Action Plan be:

- development and implementation of the fish protection directive;
- implementation of the expanded beverage container policy;
- development and implementation of new water policies;
- implementation of the new sewage management regulation.

B) APPROVED DIRECTION

Set out under Action in the Environment Status and Action Report outlined in Appendix A.

In the majority of cases it is based on previously approved policy.

New directions for consideration or area's needing review or confirmation:

1. FISH PROTECTION ACT

The directive for streamside protection under Section 12 of the Fish Protection Act will be developed in the next year and it is important that local government clearly outline the issues that need to be addressed.

ACTION: UBCM request that directives developed under the Fish Protection Act provide the following to local government:

- clear liability protection;
- flexible approach to local circumstances;
- technical assistance;
- financial assistance to implement and manage the directives.

2. CONTAMINATED SITES

The contaminated sites issue is scheduled for review in 1999 and it is important that local government be involved in the process.

ACTION: UBCM participate in the review of the contaminated sites legislation and regulations in 1998/99.

3. MUNICIPAL SEWAGE REGULATION

A new municipal sewage regulation is about to be approved and a committee established to assist in its implementation. The new regulation could affect local government operations and it is important that it be involved in the implementation process.

ACTION: UBCM participate in the multi-stakeholder implementation committee proposed by the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks to review the implementation of the new municipal sewage regulation

4. SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

There are a number of ongoing issues with respect to solid waste management which have not yet been resolved and it is important to re-iterate the need for a conflict resolution process to be included in the Waste Management Act.

ACTION: UBCM request financial assistance for:

- development of markets for recycled goods;
- transportation of recyclables to markets so as to ensure that the program is province wide;
- implementation of solid waste plans (recycling, infrastructure, education, etc.).

UBCM request the introduction of legislation/regulations to address:

- post-consumer content requirements to promote the development of markets for recycled goods;
- increased penalties and increased enforcement against littering and illegal dumping.

UBCM request the province recognize the need for flexibility in solid waste management planning. Provincial government policy recognize the differences between urban and rural areas in the operation of landfill sites - financial constraints, proximity to markets and other factors - in meeting the goals and objectives that are to be achieved.

UBCM request that the Waste Management Act be amended to include a dispute resolution process so as to avoid potential conflicts between municipalities and regional districts over solid waste management.

5. PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMS

a) Beverage Containers

An expansion of the beverage container system is expected on October 1, 1998 and it is important to confirm local government's position on this issue during the crucial implementation phase of the new policy.

ACTION: UBCM continue to support the development of an expanded deposit-refund system which will enhance the recovery of recyclable containers, and that milk containers be included in the future.

UBCM support the implementation of beverage container stewardship plans which are flexible and provide the greatest convenience to the consumer.

UBCM work with the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks in the development of a clear exit-from-retail policy and process which is convenient to the consumer and workable from a local government perspective.

b) Household Hazardous Waste Stewardship

Implementation of the new household hazardous waste program over the past year has identified a number of issues related to the program, one of these issues is that the program does not provide a collection service for small and rural communities.

ACTION: UBCM request that the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks require all brandowners of household hazardous wastes to implement a collection service for small and rural communities. The brandowners of household hazardous wastes be requested to fulfil their stewardship requirements by implementing a program which is:

- fully funded by the industry;
- convenient to the consumer.

c) Packaging Stewardship

One of the remaining areas of industry stewardship where local government may reduce its waste management cost is through the implementation of a packaging stewardship program.

ACTION: UBCM request that the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks require the development of an industry operated and funded packaging stewardship program and that this funding be used for local recycling programs.

UBCM request that:

- industry be required to take 'cradle-to-grave' responsibility for their products and packaging to maximize reduction initiatives and minimize costs;
- legislative changes be introduced to assist in the development of markets for recycled goods by requiring new products to contain a certain percentage of recycled material;
- restrictions be placed on the type of packaging that can be used - mandated refuse reduction, such as requiring standardized containers;
- programs and policies be developed that will provide strong incentives to manufacturers to reduce packaging;

6. WATER STEWARDSHIP**a) Protection of Community Water Supplies**

The Auditor General is expected to release a report on community water supplies in the fall of 1998 and provide a basis for discussing this issue in the upcoming year.

Action: UBCM request legislation to protect the quantity and quality of community water supplies.

b) Groundwater Management

Local government may through the development of a watershed management plan be able to regulate the use of groundwater under some circumstances, this is relatively new legislation and has not yet be used by a community.

ACTION: UBCM work with the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks in the implementation of watershed management plans in areas where there are community concerns and where there is an identified water quality related health risk.

c) Water Conservation

A discussion paper on water conservation strategy is expected to be released by the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks and will provide a basis for discussing the future direction of this issue.

ACTION: UBCM request that local government be given the authority to undertake water conservation measures needed to ensure the future water supply of the community.

7. FLOOD HAZARD MANAGEMENT

The federal and provincial government are currently looking at the future direction of flood hazard management and further discussions will take place in the upcoming year.

ACTION: UBCM request that the federal and provincial government and First Nations work in partnership with local government in the implementation of an integrated flood hazard management strategy.

UBCM request that the federal and provincial government provide financial assistance for:

- floodplain mapping;
- construction of new flood protection works (dykes, rip rap etc.);
- major dyke maintenance projects;
- emergency flood hazard management.

8. AIR QUALITY STEWARDSHIP

The federal and provincial government in the upcoming year will be looking at measures that they can take to address the greenhouse gas issue.

ACTION: UBCM request that local government be given the legislative authority to become involved in the development of an airshed management plan where there is an identified health risk.

UBCM request that the provincial government under its greenhouse gas policy provide infrastructure funding to local government to assist in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

UBCM request the provincial government take action on the following issues:

- ethanol/methanol as an alternative fuel;
- expansion of mandatory motor vehicle emissions testing in areas where there are air quality problems;
- establish the demand for and demonstrate the use of factory designed alternate fuel vehicles and continue the current road tax exemption for alternative fuels.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

A review of a number of threshold levels that could potentially affect local government may be taken in the upcoming year.

ACTION: UBCM continue to work with the Environmental Assessment Office in the implementation of the environmental assessment legislation and regulations.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the 1998/99 Environment Action Plan be approved.

APPENDIX A

ENVIRONMENT STATUS AND ACTION REPORT

ENVIRONMENT ISSUES

Brief status updates on the following topics are included in the report.

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ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION/REGULATIONS

1. FISH PROTECTION ACT

ISSUE: The role of local government in the development and implementation of streamside directives developed under the Fish Protection Act.

STATUS: The Fish Protection Act - Bill 25 (1997) is the cornerstone of the “BC Fisheries Strategy.” The four main objectives of the Fish Protection Act are:

- ensuring water for fish;
- protecting and restoring fish habitat;
- focusing on riparian protection and enhancement; and
- strengthening local environmental planning.

The Bill provides for provincial policy directives to be established to protect and enhance riparian areas in settings which may be subject to residential, commercial or industrial development. The Act states that: “*Directives ... may*

only be established after consultation by the Minister with representatives of the Union of British Columbia Municipalities.”

Section 12 of the Fish Protection Act states that:

- the province may “establish policy directives regarding the protection and enhancement of riparian areas that the Lieutenant Governor in Council considers may be subject to residential, commercial or industrial development.”
- the policy directives “may be different for different parts of British Columbia and in relation to different circumstances as established by the directives.”
- local government “must include in its zoning and rural land use bylaws riparian protection provisions in accordance with the directive” or “provide a level of protection that, in the opinion of the local government, is comparable to or exceeds that established by the directive.”

At the 1997 UBCM Convention a resolution was endorsed supporting the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks and Ministry of Municipal Affairs and the UBCM to ensure that the following local government needs are addressed when implementing directives under the Fish Protection Act. The following benchmarks were established for local government participation in this process:

- clear liability protection;
- flexible approach to local circumstances;
- technical assistance;
- financial assistance to implement and manage the directives.

A workshop was held on December 4, 1997 and was attended by approximately 100 local government representatives. Mayor Ranta, Chair of the UBCM Environment Committee, stressed the need to ensure that:

- the process is flexible enough to deal with local circumstances in each community;
- the balance between environmental protection and community goals is fair;
- a workable partnership is being created between different levels of government;
- the process reduces the overlap between the different levels of government;
- the process reduces or minimizes the administrative burden between the different levels of government.

The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks was delayed in its discussions on the development of the fish protection directive by re-organization within the provincial government and the development of a new strategy for implementing the fish protection directive.

Deputy Minister Cassie Doyle indicated that the ministry is looking at the “development of a flexible regulation aimed at achieving results.”

- **Consultation**

The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks undertook a series of consultation sessions in June 1998 on the development and implementation of the Fish Protection Directive and on the identification of sensitive streams.

The consultations were held in Campbell River, Nanaimo, Victoria, Maple Ridge, Burnaby, Kamloops, Surrey and Chilliwack. In addition, meetings were held in Williams Lake, Prince George, Terrace and Nelson.

- **Directive**

A new approach to the use of setbacks, as one tool in a broad range of tools used by local government in the planning process, is under consideration. This new approach may see the management of streams based on the objectives needed to protect fish habitat, rather than on a fixed distance from a stream.

- **Geographic Scope**

The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks has indicated that the regulation will initially only apply to the Lower Mainland/Fraser Valley, the east side of Vancouver Island and sections of the Southern Interior (Okanagan Valley/Thompson River area).

Consultations on a draft stewardship directive is to be undertaken:

- clinic at the 1998 UBCM Convention - update on consultation process and next steps;
- local government workshop in November 1998, facilitated by the Fraser Basin Council.

ACTION: UBCM request that directives developed under the Fish Protection Act provide the following to local government:

- clear liability protection;
- flexible approach to local circumstances;
- technical assistance;
- financial assistance to implement and manage the directives.

2. CONTAMINATED SITES

ISSUE: Local governments' role in the identification and approval of development on property identified as having contaminated soil.

STATUS: The province established the framework for the management of contaminated sites with the following actions:

- Contaminated Sites Regulation passed by cabinet in 1996;
- Waste Management Amendment Act, 1993 (Bill 26) into force.

- Local Government Statutes Amendment Act (No. 2) in 1997 - expanded the scope of liability protection to local government under the Waste Management Act.

Overall local government obtained:

- limited protection for 'retroactive' and 'joint/several' liability;
- increased liability protection for its employees involved in administering the regulation;
- added flexibility in administering the regulation (i.e. opting-out provision);
- limited cost recovery when providing the service.

The province has not changed the property assessment process to reflect provincial policy on contaminated sites.

The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks in 1997 established a Joint/Industry Government Contaminated Sites Implementation Committee, which the UBCM is involved in, to review the implementation of the contaminated sites regulation.

A new computer on-line system was established in 1998 for contaminated sites. The computer lists information available on a variety of properties throughout the province that has been remediated for contamination or that is identified as being contaminated.

Overall the major impact of the contaminated sites policy on local government is in the following areas:

- administration - liability protection of local government and its employees;
- flexibility in the process;
- cost recovery;
- property taxation.

A review of the regulation will be undertaken in 1999 to determine what changes are needed based on initial experiences with implementing the regulation, advances in science, the law and the management of contaminated sites.

ACTION: UBCM participate in the review of the contaminated sites legislation and regulations in 1998/99.

3. MUNICIPAL SEWAGE REGULATION

ISSUE: Local governments' role in the construction, operation and management of sewage disposal facilities.

STATUS: A draft Municipal Sewage Regulation has been developed to provide a framework so that the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks can move away from the existing permitting process to a regulatory process. The intent is to allow the ministry to set a general standard that all sewage

treatment facilities must comply with rather than issue an individual permit for each facility.

The regulation was first released for comment in August 1997. The ministry received over 70 submissions and participated in dozens of stakeholder meetings concerning the issue. A further draft of the regulation was prepared (Draft 4.1) and a summary of all of the comments and ministry response to each concern was released on April 8, 1998 and distributed to all stakeholders. The deadline date for final comments was June 8, 1998.

The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks in response to local government concerns made the following changes to the regulation:

- focused studies and implementation measures instead of liquid waste management plans for smaller discharges;
- cost-effective alternative or equivalent measures of ensuring reliability;
- certified operators will be required, but there may be some flexibility in the amount of time the trained and certified operator is physically at the facility;
- regulation will be structured to provide alternatives through LWMPs and economic incentives and the ministry will work with Municipal Affairs to address funding issues for infrastructure renewal projects on a priority basis;
- development and implementation of an approved liquid waste management plan would take precedence over the Waste Management Act, it would allow a local government to develop local solutions to its problems and remove it from the direct authority of the Regional Manager;
- ministry has removed the inflow and infiltration requirements that were a concern of some of the older communities;
- removed the proposed fees for combined sewer overflow and sanitary sewer overflow.

The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks has proposed the establishment of a multi-stakeholder Implementation Committee to review the development of implementation policy and procedures and guideline documents for the regulation. Prior to establishing new time frames and imposing additional requirements under the regulation, the ministry has agreed to consider the following factors:

- population growth;
- public values;
- financing capability; and,
- assimilative capacity of the receiving environment.

ACTION: UBCM participate in the multi-stakeholder implementation committee proposed by the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks to review the implementation of the new municipal sewage regulation.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT

4. SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

ISSUE: The responsibility of local government in the development of solid waste management plans, the operation of landfill sites and the financial costs associated with the collection and disposal of recycled goods.

STATUS: The provincial government amended the Waste Management Act in 1990 and subsequently made a number of policy changes concerning solid waste management. The affect of these legislative and policy changes was to:

- require that all of the regional districts have solid waste plans completed and approved - not all regional districts have approved plans;
- set a target of reducing the amount of garbage collected by 50% by the year 2000;
- establish a more rigorous criteria for the operation and management of landfill sites;
- eliminate all financial assistance to local government for the implementation of solid waste management - planning grants and financial assistance for recycling programs.

At the start of solid waste planning process in 1990 a Sustainable Environment Fund was created to assist in solid waste management - planning, recycling programs etc. The fund is made up of levies from waste permit fees, scrap tires, batteries and diapers. The money collected from the Sustainable Environment Fund today, that is not re-directed back to the industry involved, is used to fund ministry programs and administration related to solid waste management.

The impact of the changes in solid waste management on local government has been to:

- increase the overall cost of solid waste management in urban and rural areas;
- increase the cost of operating and managing landfill sites;
- reduce the number of rural landfill operations;
- increase the number of transfer stations;
- reduce local government flexibility in the location and operation of landfill sites;
- reduce local governments' long term liability for landfill operations;
- place the full cost of implementing solid waste management plans on local government.
- place the cost of collection and market development for recycled goods on local government, rather than the manufacturer taking cradle-to-grave responsibility for the products.

The Waste Management Act was amended in 1998 giving regional districts the ability by bylaw to control a broader range of solid waste initiatives in the region. In order to exercise this authority it must be outlined in the solid waste management plan for the region and the bylaw must be approved by the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks. The legislative changes also gave the GVRD authority to regulate private operators of landfills. The UBCM, in supporting these legislative changes, requested that a dispute

resolution mechanism be added to the Waste Management Act, similar to that outlined for growth strategies in the Municipal Act (s. 858-862).

ACTION: UBCM request financial assistance for:

- development of markets for recycled goods;
- transportation of recyclables to markets so as to ensure that the program is province wide;
- implementation of solid waste plans (recycling, infrastructure, education, etc.).

UBCM request the introduction of legislation/regulations to address:

- post-consumer content requirements to promote the development of markets for recycled goods;
- increased penalties and increased enforcement against littering and illegal dumping.

UBCM request the province recognize the need for flexibility in solid waste management planning. Provincial government policy recognize the differences between urban and rural areas in the operation of landfill sites - financial constraints, proximity to markets and other factors - in meeting the goals and objectives that are to be achieved.

UBCM request that the Waste Management Act be amended to include a dispute resolution process so as to avoid potential conflicts between municipalities and regional districts over solid waste management.

5. **PRODUCT STEWARDSHIP PROGRAMS**

There are currently nine product stewardship programs in place. These programs cover the following products beverage containers, tires, lead acid batteries, oil, paint, Ni-CAD batteries, pharmaceuticals and household hazardous wastes (solvents, flammable liquids, pesticides, gasoline and residuals). There are two programs in the development stage the Automotive Dismantlers and Recyclers and the Scrap Metal Recyclers.

a) Beverage Containers

ISSUE: The impact on local government of an expanded deposit system to promote industry stewardship and reduce local government recycling costs.

STATUS: Local government has requested that the province expand the deposit system to include a wider range of beverage containers (carbonated beverages, mineral water, liquor and wine bottles etc.) on numerous occasions - a total of 15 resolutions since 1990.

On April 5, 1997 the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks announced that the beverage container deposit system would be expanded to include all ready-to-drink beverages except milk and milk substitutes and containers larger than 5 litres.

Beverages requiring a deposit under the new system will include - soft drinks, beer, cider and coolers; carbonated drinks and non-carbonated drinks (Koala, Clearly Canadian, etc.); thirst quenchers/sports drinks, bottled water; fruit and vegetable drinks and wine and spirits.

The province has created an interim Container Management Board to administer the expanded deposit system made up of beverage producers, depot operators, retailers, provincial and local government officials. UBCM currently has two representatives on the Container Management Board.

The implementation of key elements in the expansion of the beverage container system are outlined below:

- ***Stewardship Plans***

The provincial government on April 1, 1998 approved three major stewardship plans for the management of beverage containers from the following agencies: Liquor Distribution Branch (wine and spirits); Brewer Distributor Limited (beer); Encorp Pacific (pop, bottled water and other related beverage container types).

- ***Beverage Container Expansion***

On **October 1, 1998** the deposit refund system is scheduled to be expanded to include wine and liquor bottles, carbonated and non-carbonated drinks (Koala, Canadian Clear etc.), bottled water, fruit and vegetable drinks and thirst quenchers/sports drinks.

- ***Return Centres***

Encorp Pacific is working with a number of large urban communities to establish return depots for bottles in commercial areas. The first retail centre is expected to be opened in Nanaimo and five or six other sites are under consideration in the lower mainland.

- ***Return-to-Retail***

All retail stores which sell beverage containers will be required to collect them unless an exit-from-retail plan is implemented. A number of grocery stores are experimenting with reverse vending machines or considering in store depot operations. Two of the stewardship plans are promoting return-to-retail (liquor stores, rural agency stores etc.). Another stewardship plan is promoting a depot system.

The implications to local government of the implementation of the expanded beverage container program are:

- reduced landfill costs;
- brandowners taking responsibility for products;
- zoning changes to allow for return centres to be established in large urban communities;
- review of exit-from-retail programs in regional districts.

ACTION: UBCM continue to support the development of an expanded deposit-refund system which will enhance the recovery of recyclable containers, and that milk containers be included in the future.

UBCM support the implementation of beverage container stewardship plans which are flexible and provide the greatest convenience to the consumer.

UBCM work with the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks in the development of a clear exit-from-retail policy and process which is convenient to the consumer and workable from a local government perspective.

b) Household Hazardous Waste Stewardship

ISSUE: The impact on and role of local government in an industry program developed to collect special wastes at the household level.

STATUS: The Ministry passed a regulation on March 26, 1997 requiring brand owners of solvent and flammable liquids, pesticides, and gasoline to implement an industry stewardship program for the collection and disposal of these types of household hazardous wastes.

The Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks has approved two different industry stewardship programs, the Consumer Product Care Association (CPCA) and the Product Stewardship Group (PSC), for consumers to return their solvent/flammable liquid, domestic pesticide and gasoline residuals.

Under the program the brand owner is able to charge the consumer a fee for the administration and implementation of the stewardship program. This is an eco-fee collected by the industry and not a government tax. The fee represents a price increase in the product imposed by the manufacturer, in Alberta for example the costs of the program have been picked up at the retail level and not by a separate eco-fee imposed on the consumer.

Implications of the household hazardous waste program to date has been:

- reduction of household hazardous wastes going into local landfills;
- establishment of 30 collection depots around the province;
- consumer protest over the price increases (eco-fee) imposed on some of the products by the brandowner;
- concern by local governments about the lack of a program to serve small and rural communities.

ACTION: UBCM request that the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks require all brandowners of household hazardous wastes to implement a collection service for small and rural communities. The brandowners of household hazardous wastes be requested to fulfil their stewardship requirements by implementing a program which is:

- fully funded by the industry;
- convenient to the consumer.

c) Packaging Stewardship

ISSUE: The impact on local government of a proposed industry operated and funded product and packaging stewardship program.

STATUS: Packaging stewardship, as a component of solid waste management, has been an ongoing concern of local government. The solution to the packaging issue from a local government perspective lies with industry undertaking “cradle-to-grave” responsibility for the products it produces.

The introduction of post-consumer content requirements could have positive impact on local government. The implementation of an industry operated and funded packaging stewardship program would substantially reduce local governments solid waste management costs. Alternatively it could provide a potential \$10 to \$25 million dollars in new funding for local government solid waste collection programs.

ACTION: UBCM request that the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks require the development of an industry operated and funded packaging stewardship program and that this funding be used for local recycling programs.

UBCM request that:

- industry be required to take ‘cradle-to-grave’ responsibility for their products and packaging to maximize reduction initiatives and minimize costs;
- legislative changes be introduced to assist in the development of markets for recycled goods by requiring new products to contain a certain percentage of recycled material;
- restrictions be placed on the type of packaging that can be used - mandated refuse reduction, such as requiring standardized containers;
- programs and policies be developed that will provide strong incentives to manufacturers to reduce packaging;

6. WATER STEWARDSHIP

a) Protection of Community Water Supplies

Issue: Local government role in the protection of drinking water for communities.

Status: The Auditor General is doing an audit of the actions undertaken by the province to protect drinking water sources. The intent of the audit is to answer the following question:

Is the BC government providing appropriate protection to drinking water sources from human-mediated impacts?

The audit is intended to examine the protection measures adopted by the province to protect drinking water sources in eight communities around the province and use this as a basis for assessing its overall policy.

Most BC drinking water systems use only disinfection by chlorine and minor settling. Only five surface water systems, out of 600 in the province, use filtration. This minimal treatment has been acceptable because, historically, BC has had abundant water, large catchment areas with little human activity, and a relatively small population.

The tendency to minimal treatment may pose some health risk. The province faces a large “lurking expenditure” if forced to adopt elaborate water treatment. One estimate is that the capital cost alone of installing filtration throughout BC would be \$1.5 to \$2 billion.

The implications of the Auditor General’s report could be significant from a local government perspective and have the following range of consequences:

- establish new drinking water standards;
- increase treatment costs for drinking water (i.e. require filtration systems);
- propose increased control by local government over access and activities in watersheds used for community water supplies;
- propose protection of groundwater used for community water supplies.

Action: UBCM request legislation to protect the quantity and quality of community water supplies.

b) Groundwater Management

ISSUE: Local governments role in the establishment of standards and the management of groundwater.

STATUS: Groundwater accounts for 9% of total water use in British Columbia and as much as 40% in rural areas. The largest user of groundwater is industry (55%), followed by municipal and rural use (25%) and finally agriculture at (20%).

In 1997 the province introduced amendments to the Water Act (Bill 25 - Fish Protection Act) which give the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks the power to designate an area as a water management area where there are conflicts between water users, a shortage of water or risks to water quality and require that a water management plan be developed. The legislative change does not apply to areas governed by the Forest Act, Range Act or Forest Practices Code of British Columbia.

A water management plan may address the allocation of water from a specific water source as well as “surface runoff not in a stream and groundwater”. Water management plans are required to take into consideration “the results of Provincial government or local government strategic operational and land use planning processes within the water management area.”

The implications of these changes to the Water Act are that:

- local communities can request that the Minister of Environment Lands and Parks designate an area as a water management area;
- once designated a water management plan can be developed to address both surface water and groundwater.

ACTION: UBCM work with the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks in the implementation of watershed management plans in areas where there are community concerns and where there is an identified water quality related health risk.

c) Water Conservation

ISSUE: Local governments' role in ensuring the water supply meets the future needs of the community.

STATUS: The province has established a Water Conservation Strategy Working Group made up of provincial and local government officials. The intent is to develop a Water Conservation Strategy for British Columbia which:

- demonstrates the need for water use efficiency measures;
- reinforces the value of BC's water resource;
- presents a menu of water use efficiency tools and techniques;
- identifies and acknowledges water use efficiency initiatives in BC;
- provides a guide for the development of provincial and local policies and standards for water use efficiency.

The implications of a water conservation program to local government are:

- reduce or defer infrastructure costs (i.e. water delivery, treatment and disposal systems);
- implementation of pricing strategies for water allocation which reflect its full costs and benefits;
- implementation of water audit and leak detection programs;
- metering of residential and industrial water users;
- require water conservation measures in new buildings.

ACTION: UBCM request that local government be given the authority to undertake water conservation measures needed to ensure the future water supply of the community.

7. FLOOD HAZARD MANAGEMENT

ISSUE: Local governments' role in the development of flood hazard management plans.

STATUS: The 1968 Canada-British Columbia Agreement which established the Fraser River Flood Control Program and has provided the major source of funding for dyke construction and maintenance ended on March 31, 1995. There is no agreement concerning flood hazard management on the Fraser River at the present time. Both the federal and provincial government have indicated that they do not intend to renew the agreement. They have proposed instead that a new type of agreement be negotiated that would include the

management of both structural and non-structural flood hazard measures and would attempt to co-ordinate the activities of all the agencies involved in this area.

An Intergovernmental Task Force on Flood Hazard Management was established, under the auspices of the Fraser Basin Management Program, and a draft strategy paper outlining the existing problems and possible solutions was released at the 1996 UBCM Convention (Integrated Flood Hazard Management Strategy). The report identified the overlapping land use management issues that exist between federal, provincial, and local government; the unique problems presented by historic settlements in floodplains; and it proposed an ongoing partnership between all of the parties involved in the management of flood hazards.

The Fraser Basin Council released a report entitled “Financing Issues Associated with Flood Hazard Management”. The new document is an addendum to the larger paper on integrated flood hazard management released in 1996; it explores a variety of funding mechanisms available to the federal, provincial and local governments for financing capital and operating costs of flood hazard management activities.

The Fraser Basin Council in 1998 established a Joint Program Committee of the Integrated Flood Hazard Management Strategy. As part of this process five sub-committees have been established: Emergency Response and Recovery; Financing; Dyke and Channel Maintenance and Habitat; Flood Proofing and Land Use Planning; and Public Education.

The provincial government under the Provincial Emergency Program in 1998 provided a total of \$3 million dollars to address flood hazard problems. Under this program the province provides 75% of the funding and the applicant 25% of the funding for each project.

ACTION: UBCM request that the federal and provincial government and First Nations work in partnership with local government in the implementation of an integrated flood hazard management strategy.

UBCM request that the federal and provincial government provide financial assistance for:

- floodplain mapping;
- construction of new flood protection works (dykes, rip rap etc.);
- major dyke maintenance projects;
- emergency flood hazard management.

8. AIR QUALITY STEWARDSHIP

ISSUE: Local governments’ role in the establishment of standards and the management of local airshed emissions, given the growing importance of clean air to the quality of life in local communities.

STATUS: The provincial government has delegated the authority for airshed management in the lower mainland to the GVRD and the Fraser Valley regional districts at their request in an effort to allow them to develop specific programs to address their air pollution problems and will work with other local governments to develop a similar process on an “as needed basis”.

The province adopted a regulation in 1998 with respect to the phase out of beehive burners at sawmills, which recognizes both the environmental and economic implications. The regulation requires that the local community and industry work together to address the issue of beehive burners and their impact.

A motor vehicle emission inspection program (AirCare) has been established in the lower mainland in order to reduce air pollution. The provincial government has passed legislation which will allow it to introduce regulations governing the operation of motor vehicles and wood stoves.

The provincial government has introduced a regulation to assist in buying back old vehicles so that they can be scrapped. The purpose of the program is to reduce the amount of air pollution from older motor vehicles - SCRAP-IT PROGRAM.

Greenhouse Gas Forum Report

The province on October 30, 1997 forwarded the first report of the Greenhouse Gas Forum - which includes representatives from business, labour, environmental and public interest groups, and local government - to the federal government. The report recommended that the following elements be included in Canada's international negotiating position on greenhouse gas emissions in Kyoto Japan:

- legally binding limits on industrialized country greenhouse gas emissions;
- the need for developing countries to take on emission reduction commitments;
- flexibility in the international treaty to reduce greenhouse gas emissions - emission budgeting and banking provisions and emission trading.

International Agreement on Greenhouse Gas

Canada on December 11, 1997 in Kyoto, Japan signed an international agreement to reduce Canada's emissions from greenhouse gases to 6% below 1990 levels, as averaged between 2008 and 2012. The agreement allows each country to define different paths for meeting their national emission targets. These include: international trading of credits for emission reductions; banking of credits from one commitment period to future periods; and credits from projects implemented jointly whether in developed or developing countries. The agreement will come into force when it is ratified by 55 countries representing at least 55% of developed countries' emissions.

The implementation process is being co-ordinated from the Prime Minister's Office, it would appear that the Department of Natural Resources is to co-

ordinate domestic policy and the Department of Environment will deal with international treaty negotiations. The federal government has established a number of federal/provincial/stakeholder tables to examine what action Canada might take: Modelling & Analysis, International Emission Trading, Technology, Credit for Early Action, Public Education & Outreach, Transportation, Electricity, and one for Municipalities chaired by the FCM.

The Greenhouse Gas issue is a complex problem that brings together economic, environmental and urban development issues. The biggest source of greenhouse gas pollution in British Columbia is from automobiles (41%) in the lower mainland.

British Columbia's economy due to its high dependence on transportation, type of industrial development and historically high population growth is particularly sensitive to policies which may be implemented to address the greenhouse gas issue. The development of a Greenhouse Gas policy provides an opportunity for local government to request a share of the federal fuel tax to address the issue on a regional basis and to obtain infrastructure funding for regional transit.

The provincial government is looking at a number of measures to address the greenhouse gas issue:

- Emission Reduction Trading Program

The provincial government, in partnership with the federal government, a number of other provinces and industry, has established a Greenhouse Gas Emission Reduction Trading pilot program to assess environmental and economic benefits of Emission Reduction Trading (ERT) as a tool to reduce greenhouse gases;

- Co-generation and Renewable Energy (expansion of co-generation of heat and power - burning of wood residues to generate electricity);
- Community Energy Planning - B.C. Energy Aware Committee proposals;
- Promote the use of natural gas and propane vehicles;
- Promote the use of the ballard fuel cell and Westport Innovations (adapt existing diesel engines to natural gas).

Overall implications to local government are uncertain at this time, however, it could impact the following areas:

- transportation infrastructure - funding through federal fuel tax;
- energy and community planning - growth patterns and density;
- sewer and water infrastructure - impact of extreme changes in climate and overall unpredictable weather patterns.

ACTION: UBCM request that local government be given the legislative authority to become involved in the development of an airshed management plan where there is an identified health risk.

UBCM request that the provincial government under its greenhouse gas policy provide infrastructure funding to local government to assist in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

UBCM request the provincial government take action on the following issues:

- ethanol/methanol as an alternative fuel;
- expansion of mandatory motor vehicle emissions testing in areas where there are air quality problems;
- establish the demand for and demonstrate the use of factory designed alternate fuel vehicles and continue the current road tax exemption for alternative fuels.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

ISSUE: The role of local government in the determination of environmental assessments. There are two specific areas of concern:

- the nature and type of local government projects which will come under review;
- the nature of local government involvement in project reviews.

STATUS: The Environmental Assessment Act (Bill 29) was approved by the Legislature of British Columbia in 1994 and the legislation was proclaimed and the regulations implemented in 1996.

The Act establishes a process for the identification of any potential impacts of major projects, including the evaluation of economic and social benefits and measures to prevent or mitigate adverse environmental impacts or other impacts. The legislation is intended to provide certainty and balance for environmental interests, business interests, local government and the public. UBCM was involved in extensive consultations on the Environmental Assessment Act and the regulations.

A review of the provincial Environmental Assessment Act was undertaken in 1997/98. The report looked at the workability of the threshold levels, scope of the project reviews, timelines, project committees, First Nation involvement, public involvement and other factors in the process. The report concluded that overall the legislation had met its objectives and recommended some changes related to consultation with First Nations, changes to some of the timelines, a review of some of the threshold levels, and a few other minor changes to the process.

The major impact of the regulation on local government is in relation to major projects:

- landfill sites (i.e. size of Cache Creek or larger);
- sewage treatment facilities (i.e. designed for a community over 10,000 population);
- transportation (i.e. transit systems, road expansions and bridges).

ACTION: UBCM continue to work with the Environmental Assessment Office in the implementation of the environmental assessment legislation and regulations.