

Nanoose Bay water plant \$1.4 million

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The problem of discoloured drinking water in some areas of Nanoose Bay would be a thing of the past if the Regional District of Nanaimo goes ahead with a proposed \$1.4-million treatment facility, a public meeting heard Monday night.

For \$24 a year or less in capital cost, taxpayers can see the problem of sediment and discolour end by the summer of 2011, RDN officials told about 120 people in Nanoose Place. That's when the facility is expected to be operating.



A chlorination treatment plant in Red Gap across from the Library at Nanoose Road and Northwest Bay Road will go ahead, provided RDN board approval is provided, said manager of water services Mike Donnelly. "This is, from an operator's point of view, the perfect site," in terms of flow in the system, he said. "We pilot-tested this system three years ago ... and it worked like a dream."

CREDIT:

The RDN's Mike Donnelly talks water Monday night.

In response to a resident who asked if the new plant would create a chlorine taste, Donnelly said "we'll actually use a lot less chlorine in the water" with the new plant. The sludge (containing iron and manganese) would be shipped out once a month to a landfill site.

The operating costs in terms of staff could be absorbed by existing personnel, Donnelly said, though because of other additions to the system another person may have to be hired.

The long-term plan for drinking water in Nanoose Bay is bulk water from the Englishman River, which is already supplying some water to the area. The proposed Red Gap plant would not become redundant in view of this plan, the RDN's John Finnie, manager of regional and community utilities, told a questioner, because the water from some wells would still need to be treated.

A water treatment plant on the Englishman River is expected to be functioning by 2015, the meeting heard.

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