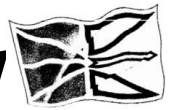


JUNE 1, 2001

Noteworthy



Drinking water plan announced

Premier Roger Grimes announced government's plan of action to ensure the continued protection and safety of public water supplies in the province on Monday, May 28. Environment Minister Ralph Wiseman, Municipal and Provincial Affairs Minister Oliver Langdon, Government Services and Lands Minister Walter Noel and Health and Community Services Minister (acting) Gerald Smith joined the premier in making the announcement.

"The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador will continue to be vigilant in its efforts to provide municipalities with continued access to safe drinking water," said Premier Grimes. "This plan of action will enhance the protection of public drinking water supplies and maintain public confidence in our drinking water."

Government's \$50 million investment in water quality over the next three years strengthens the existing multi-barrier approach to water quality management. Special emphasis will be placed on legislation and policy, source protection and management, infrastructure, monitoring and reporting, inspections and mitigation, operator training and single point contact for public inquiries.

Key elements of the plan include increasing the number of inspectors and the frequency of water testing, providing municipalities with funding to install or upgrade chlorination equipment, providing operator training and education, and keeping the public informed about water quality.

Source to Tap: Water Supplies in Newfoundland and Labrador, May 2001, a comprehensive report on the current state of the province's water supplies, was also released by Premier Grimes. This report provides information on testing and protection of drinking water. *Source to Tap* is available at www.gov.nf.ca/env/sourcetotap.

Transportation initiatives for Labrador

Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs Minister Ernest McLean and Works, Services and Transportation Minister Percy Barrett recently announced a number of transportation initiatives for Labrador. Funding for several roads projects, as well as funding for environmental work on the Trans-Labrador Highway and the establishment of a transportation committee on Labrador's north coast were announced.

A number of road improvement projects worth \$3 million have been approved in several south coast communities over a two year period. Funding will be allocated to St. Lewis, Charlottetown, Mary's Harbour, Port Hope Simpson and Cartwright. Over the next two years, \$1 million will be spent to upgrade and resurface sections of the North West River Road.

Government will invest \$1 million to prepare an environmental impact statement for Phase III of the Trans-Labrador Highway between Happy Valley-Goose Bay and Cartwright. Government has also committed to consulting with various interest groups before a route is selected for Phase III. Also, a transportation committee for northern communities, similar to the Southern Labrador Transportation Committee formed last year, will be established to seek input from those dependent on marine services. A final report on marine services is expected by fall.

Spring legislative session productive

Government House Leader Tom Lush said government was pleased that all required budget debate took place and that the House passed 19 important pieces of legislation. Mr. Lush said the spring session clearly demonstrated that government is moving forward. The House of Assembly closed for the summer on May 24.

"The spring session is typically taken up with budget matters," said Mr. Lush. "However, we decided to also undertake a comprehensive legislative agenda that followed up on many of our commitments to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador."

Highlights included introduction of: the *Petroleum Products Act* to facilitate gas price regulation, the *Tobacco Related Health Care Recovery Act* allowing government to pursue legal action against tobacco companies, and the *Citizens' Representative Act*.

Other new initiatives included the *Order of Newfoundland and Labrador Act*, the *Supply Act 2001* and the *Municipal Elections Act*. Amendments were made to 13 existing acts, including: *Schools Act, 1997*; *Medical Act, 1999*; *Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*; and the *Labour Relations Act*.

