HALIFAX
REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY

Request for Council's Consideration

9 **Included on Agenda**
(Submitted to Municipal
Clerk's Office by Noon
Thursday)

x **Added Item**
(Submitted to Municipal
Clerk's Office by Noon
Monday)

9 **Request from the Floor**

Date of Council Meeting: May 18, 2010

Subject: FCM Emergency Resolution re Cost-Sharing Proposed New Federal Wastewater Regulations

Motion for Council to Consider:

I move that Halifax Regional Council support the attached resolution of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities concerning cost-sharing of the proposed new federal wastewater regulations.

Reason:

Due to the costs associated with the new regulations, this will protect property tax payers by cost-sharing with the federal government.

Outcome Sought:

Regional Council support of the FCM call on the federal government to work with municipalities, provinces, and territories to develop a cost-shared financing and implementation plan for these new wastewater regulations, as part of a long-term national plan to eliminate the municipal infrastructure deficit.

Councillor *Mary Wile*   District *10*   *Date:* May 17, 2010

ENV10.X.XX
PROTECT PROPERTY TAX PAYERS BY COST-SHARING PROPOSED NEW FEDERAL WASTEWATER REGULATIONS

WHEREAS Environment Canada has recently proposed draft regulations that would set a baseline standard for all wastewater systems in Canada; and,

WHEREAS municipalities support efforts to improve wastewater treatment and protect Canada's rivers, lakes and oceans; and,

WHEREAS these regulations will require upgrades to one in four wastewater systems in Canada, directly affecting over 400 municipalities; and,

WHEREAS cities and communities are already facing an estimated $123-billion municipal infrastructure deficit that does not include the cost of meeting these new wastewater regulations and $115 billion more is needed to expand and build new infrastructure to serve growing populations and support economic development; and,

WHEREAS the cost of meeting these new regulations in just four cities is estimated by the local authorities at more than $4 billion, which accounts for almost all of Environment Canada's $5.9 billion estimate for the entire country, suggesting that the government's estimates are far too low; and,

WHEREAS Environment Canada has proposed these draft regulations without a cost-shared funding strategy, which means that the cost of meeting these new obligations would be, by default, imposed on municipal taxpayers; and,

WHEREAS the cost of upgrading waste water systems without a cost-shared funding strategy will result in the largest property tax increase in Canadian history, resulting in an average increase of $1,000 for hundreds of thousands of households in affected communities, and/or will require displacing projects that meet other local priority needs; and,

WHEREAS these regulations, although not directly affecting every community, reflect the infrastructure challenges facing every municipal government in the country, where councils are forced to balance the need to deliver safe drinking water with the need to upgrade crumbling overpasses and insufficient waste water treatment and congested roads, all while collecting just eight cents of every tax dollar paid; and,

WHEREAS there are serious concerns with Environment Canada's cost estimates and technical aspects of the regulations that can not be resolved within the 60 day public comment period; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that FCM call on the federal government to work with municipalities, provinces and territories to develop a cost-shared financing and implementation plan for these new wastewater regulations, as part of a long-term national plan to eliminate the municipal infrastructure deficit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that FCM call on Environment Canada, as a first step in the development of a cost-shared funding plan, to commit to work in partnership with municipalities to establish a thorough and objective estimation of the front-line costs and trade-offs of meeting the regulations and to resolve outstanding technical and implementation issues.