



MUNICIPALITY OF THAMES CENTRE

REPORT NO. PW-ES-003-25

TO: Mayor and Members of Council
FROM: Environmental Services Superintendent
MEETING DATE: April 28, 2025
SUBJECT: Dorchester and Thorndale WWTP – 2024 Annual Reports

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PW-ES-003-25 regarding the 2024 annual reports for the Dorchester and Thorndale WWTP provided by the Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) through the operations and maintenance contract, **BE RECEIVED** for information.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with the 2024 annual reports describing the operations and maintenance of the Dorchester Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) and the Thorndale Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP).

BACKGROUND:

The wastewater treatment plants in both Thorndale and Dorchester are operated through contracted services with the Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA). The OCWA contract services were retained through a formal procurement process in 2012 to establish a 10-year contract commencing in January 2013 with 2 optional 5-year extensions. The contract was established using a base fee for the services that is adjusted annually through a predetermined formula including inflationary indexing. Staff received direction from Council to secure the first 5-year extension option in October 2023 through Council Report PW-ES-013-23 Thames Centre Wastewater Treatment Facilities – Operations, Maintenance and Management Agreement Renewal.

COMMENTS:

Annual Reporting

The 2024 annual operation reports for the Thorndale and Dorchester wastewater treatment plants were submitted to the MECP on March 21, 2025. Provincial requirements for plant operations include various criteria that are evaluated against a “limit” that is not to be exceeded and a more stringent “objective” that is the target for operations to strive to meet. These reports include various graphs of treated flows on which the “limit” and “objective” are shown for easy reference.

The Dorchester WWTP had one (1) Non-compliance under the *Fisheries Act* due to a power failure. The failure tripped a backwash pump off which allowed approximately 80m³ to leave the WWTP without passing through the tertiary treatment. This non-compliance was verbally reported to the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP). The tripped pump was reset as soon as the on-call operator arrived on site. A written notification was later forwarded to the MECP (attached).

The Thorndale WWTP had two (2) Non-compliance events in 2024, both were a result of heavy rainfall.

The first event, under the *Fisheries Act*, occurred during a heavy rain event when the pumping station became overloaded, and the plant by-passed approximately 30m³. The wastewater operator started a standby pump which dropped the level below the by-pass channel. This exceedance was verbally reported to the MECP and a written notification was later forwarded to the MECP (attached).

The second reporting, under the *Ontario Water Resources Act* and *Environmental Protection Act*, occurred as a result of a heavy rainfall event. The increase in flows caused the Thorndale WWTP to shorten the automated process times in order to match in flows entering the plant. This shortened cycle allowed a bacteria (E.coli) and total suspended solids (TSS) exceedance to leave the WWTP. The exceedances were verbally reported to the MECP. Once the flows returned to normal, these parameters moved back within the compliance limits, and a written notification was later forwarded to the MECP (attached).

Despite these isolated Non-compliance events, both plants performed well and surpassed most target objectives throughout the year.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

None

STRATEGIC PLAN LINK

Pillar: *Community Communications & Engagement*

Goal: *Increase communications between the municipality (Council and Staff) and the public*

CONSULTATION:

Matthew Belding, Process and Compliance Technician, OCWA

REFERENCES:

None.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A Dorchester WWTP Operations Report 2024 Annual Report
Attachment B Dorchester WWTP – Notice of Non-compliance – By-pass 2024 04 15
Attachment C Thorndale WWTP Operations Report 2024 Annual Report
Attachment D Thorndale WWTP – Notice of Non-compliance – By-pass 2024 07 23
Attachment E Thorndale WWTP – Notice of Non-compliance – E.coli and TSS 2024 08 09

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Reviewed by: J. Craven, Director of Public Works

Reviewed by: D. Barrick, Chief Administrative Officer