

Intelligence - Sept. 25/99 p. 9

Essroc

Dale Duetta, manager of environmental and technical affairs, began tackling the problem in 1990 and started a technical study in 1992. The result was the Water Management Plan.

The plan was to use the company's south quarry, which was mined out in the mid-80s, as a holding unit from which water could be re-used (the company's north quarry is still being mined).

Under the plan, Essroc would stop taking in water from the harbour and use the water that has filled the south quarry.

So the company installed a valve where the water was formerly discharged after use, and re-routed the water to the south

quarry. There, two primary holding tanks, also known as settling basins, were constructed within the quarry.

The first holding tank is used to allow any large particles in the water to settle before the water is released into the main section of the quarry, or common basin.

The second holding tank is used for collecting water that accumulates in the north quarry and formerly had to be pumped out.

Now it is pumped into the second holding

tank and once it has settled there, is also drained into the primary basin, where it can remain for up to 30 days. It's then pumped into the plant by a new, state of the art pump house constructed at the side of the common basin.

Nearly 1.6 kilometres of drainage ditches were constructed on Essroc property, to collect storm water runoff, snow melt, used water from the plant, and water collected in the north basin, to the primary basin in the south quarry.

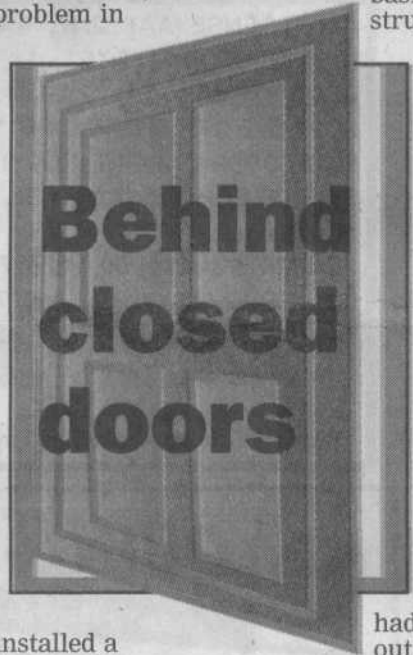
Construction on the project began in August, 1998 and the system became operational in April at a cost of \$2.5 million, says Duetta.

"It was just he right thing to

do so we took the bull by the horn and did it."

Along with complying with MISA regulations, the new system eliminates the problem of zebra mussels and gizzard shad, which had become such a problem that they occasionally caused the shut down of the plant. As well, sediment stirred up by lake freighters at the plant's docking facilities, and weeds stirred up by storms, were drawn into the distribution system and caused maintenance problems.

Duetta says the company is currently doing a chemical monitoring program of the water to determine if there is any change to its quality over a 12 month period. To date, he says, the system is working well.



**Behind closed doors**

*'It was just the right thing to do so we took the bull by the horn and did it.'*