

Spreading sludge is sticky business for Cramahe

COLUMBIAN CHRONICLE
By BOB OWEN JUNE 8/07
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Spreading Cramahe Township sludge is proving costly. Cramahe Council was faced with a conundrum on May 15 when it came to discussion the disposal of sewage sludge from its lagoon.

The job of removing the sludge was tendered out last year to Triland Environmental Inc. at a cost of \$10.75 per cubic metre for approximately 25,000 cubic metres. The bill to the township was just under \$300,000.

But, recent weather has played havoc: the sludge could not be spread. The contractor is unable to spread the sludge on the designated field this year. To deposit it on fields further away will add to the contractor's insurance, fuel and labour costs. As a result, the new price to complete work this year is \$12.75 per cubic metre. That's an increase of \$50,000 to the township if all the sludge is to be removed this year.

That left council with an awkward problem May 15.

Three companies bid last year. The nearest bid to the Triland bid was by Lissom Earth Sciences for \$17.38 per cubic metre, the highest bid \$19.91.

Public Works Director Barry Thrasher asked for council's direction.

Mayor Marc Coombs appeared to sense the dilemma, asking if the market cost to dispose of sludge had dropped. When Mr. Thrasher had no knowledge of changes, the mayor wondered if council might be subject to a bid of \$15 per cubic metre if it put the work out for re-tender.

Councillor Pat Westrope wanted to know where the money would come from to cover any increase in cost. Mr. Thrasher said there is \$350,000 being held in a sewage reserve fund.

When Councillor Ed van Egmond noted, "A good deal isn't such a good deal any more," Mr. Thrasher suggested the township doesn't need to remove all the sludge. Ultimately, when the lagoon is closed, the Ontario Ministry of the Environment will require a total clean out.

Realizing council was on unfamiliar ground, Mr. Thrasher noted township Clerk Administrator Christie Alexander could find no part of the township's purchasing bylaw to cover this type of situation.

Council unanimously accepted Deputy Mayor Jim Williams' motion that council go ahead with Triland — but limit the cost to \$300,000.

COUNTDOWN FOR NEW WINERY AT WARKWORTH

INDEPENDENT JUNE 13/07



Toasting the future of Warkworth's new Oak Heights Winery are owner Ian Frazer (right), winemaker Mike Traynor (centre) and consultant chef Peter Gosling. The winery on Highway 29 just east of the village opens to the public at the end of July.

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5