

New water treatment plant only serves 9% of community

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development opportunities in our community," said McColeman. "The new water treatment plant will provide a safe and reliable source of water for the community, and will help to bring real change and improvements for people living here."

Brant MPP Dave Levac said although the province didn't provide any funding for the plant, he will continue to raise his voice at Queen's Park to try and help Six Nations get piping extended to the entire reserve.

Kevin Martin, owner and president of First Nations Engineering, said there were doubts along the way that the small local firm could pull off the project. "It's truly an accomplishment," he said.

Bernard Valcourt, federal minister of aboriginal affairs, was scheduled to be on hand but instead said in a press release, "Improving water quality in First Nation communities is a priority for our government and I am extremely pleased that the residents of Six Nations of the Grand River can now access clean drinking water from a new water treatment plant in their community. These kinds of investments are steadily increasing the effectiveness of water services in First Nation communities."

The plant has a total production capacity of 4,050 cubic meters of water per day, which is four times higher than the production capacity of 1,036 cubic meters per day provided by the old plant.

It has a 50-year lifespan and can support up to 7,370 users.

Justin Gee, First Nations Engineering's lead designer of the project, said treated water from the plant surpasses all provincial and

federal regulations.

"It uses a multi-barrier approach. There are six steps in the treatment process that take it from source to tap. The quality of water that leaves this plant meets and exceeds all provincial and federal standards of today. It's so technologically advanced we're confident it will meet future standards that aren't even on the table yet," he said.

It can store 1 million litres of water in two reservoirs located beside the plant.

Steve Lickers, water treatment plant operator, was congratulated for all the work he's done over the years running the old plant, and now, the new one.

"I feel privileged to be a part of this today," he said. "I hope to spend many more years here looking after this building and the equipment for generations to come. Keeping the old plant going was a challenge and it's not something we're going to miss, that's for sure."

Elected Chief Hill thanked previous councils for having the "fortitude and determination" to keep pushing forward on the plant.

She said McColeman was a "real fighter" for Six Nations to get the funding for the project.

She said it was important that many Six Nations people were involved in the construction.

"We've got a lot of very talented people here," she said. "(Steve Lickers) is one of the most qualified water plant operators in the province. The community owes a debt of gratitude to Steve and his team."

Last Tuesday, elected council approved almost \$160,000 in additional costs and changes to the plant and project manager Michael Murray said there

will continue to be additional costs in the coming year.

At last week's council meeting, an irritated Dave Hill was the lone councillor opposed to every single change order brought forth by Murray.

"When is this project going to be done?" he asked. "Every time you come in here, you've got change orders, but when are these people (contractors) going to get out of there?"

Murray said contractors from construction company Maple Reinders will remain at the plant until Dec. 27 to ensure there no deficiencies in the plant.

Murray said the majority of the extra \$160,000 in costs brought to council last week will come out of council's \$2 million contingency fund.

There is about \$1 million left in the fund, he said.

"We're well within our contingency."

Some of the extra costs include:
-\$57,020 added to First Nations Engineering's contract to design a maintenance management system (\$25,000 of that will come from the budgeted cost of the WTP and \$32,020 will come from the contingency fund).

-Maple Reinders is getting an extra \$77,698 to add items to the plant including:

- an electronic chain hoist
- a mechanical floor cleaner for plant operators to clean the plant's one acre area of floor space

- furniture for the front office

- an extra \$6,800 to clean the plant before the grand opening last week

- additional shelving components

- tweaking the heating system in the mechanical room.

- \$23,250 for a three-year maintenance contract with



Former Elected Chief Bill Montour, current elected Chief Ava Hill and plant technician Steve Lickers show off the water. (Photo by Donna Durie)

SELOG Norlock Inc.

-\$797 for the plant's computer systems.

Last week's requests brought the project change order total to 20 since construction began two years ago.

Councillor Carl Hill ques-

tioned why a manual chain hoist was installed instead of the electric one that's replacing it.

Murray said he didn't know why and he blamed the decision on First Nations Engineering.

"They're the ones who

determined it when they were testing the equipment," he said.

It was the second opening for the plant. Six Nations Band Council held a sneak preview to the plant in 2013 just before the elections.