



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **FCM's Green Municipal Fund supports the Town of Virden's water quality improvement initiative**

January 29, 2010, Virden, Man. – Basil Stewart, president of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) and mayor of Summerside, P.E.I., and Merv Tweed, member of Parliament for Brandon-Souris, on behalf of Natural Resources Minister Christian Paradis, today announced Green Municipal Fund™ (GMF) support for the Town of Virden. The town will use the \$1.3 million in funding to improve water quality and reduce consumption.

“FCM's Green Municipal Fund offers a range of resources and services that specifically address the sustainable community development needs of municipal governments,” said Mr. Stewart. “The financing and knowledge provided by the Fund supports the development of communities that are more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.”

“The Government of Canada is assisting municipalities across the country in achieving their goal of a cleaner and healthier environment for Canadians through the Green Municipal Fund,” said Mr. Tweed. “I'm pleased we can partner with FCM and the Town of Virden to improve water quality for its citizens.”

Virden's water supply contains high levels of arsenic, dissolved solids, organics, and iron. The town is retrofitting its water treatment plant with high-efficiency multi-stage reverse osmosis membranes that will provide high quality water not only to its own residents but to those in surrounding jurisdictions.

The town plans to upgrade the existing water treatment process to take water quality well beyond the minimum requirements of the Canadian Water Quality Guidelines. The process will use limestone contactors — using Manitoba-sourced crushed limestone — as an alternative to phosphate-based chemicals for water stabilization. This approach will reduce the facility's overall carbon footprint related to chemical procurement, manufacturing and delivery, and all equipment will be housed in the existing building.

The town also plans to implement demand-side management techniques, including a leak detection and upgrading program for its distribution system; bylaws that encourage the use of low-flow toilets, showerheads, and dishwashers; and low water use landscaping practices in town facilities and parks.

Process upgrades and the adoption of industry best practices at the water treatment plant will reduce water loss by using multi-stage, multi-pass membranes that increase efficiency from 70 to 90 per cent. In season, residual water will be used to irrigate a local golf course, reducing the volume of water discharged into the receiving stream.

The town anticipates that these efforts will significantly decrease the levels of arsenic, dissolved solids, organics, and iron to well below the standards established in the Canadian Water Quality Guidelines. It also expects that upgrades to the water treatment process will reduce consumption of potable water by up to 10 per cent. Demand-side management is anticipated to reduce consumption by over eight per cent.

The Green Municipal Fund is an endowment financed by the Government of Canada and managed by FCM. The Fund supports partnerships and leveraging of both public and private-sector funding to reach higher standards of air, water and soil quality, and climate protection.

*FCM has been the national voice of municipal governments since 1901. It fosters the development of sustainable communities to improve quality of life by promoting strong, effective, and accountable municipal government.*

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**FCM's Green Municipal Fund**

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