



INFORMATION - COMMUNIQUÉ

November 20, 2002 – For Immediate Release

Faulty Valve Removed at the North End Water Pollution Control Centre

Winnipeg – It has been determined that the mechanical failure at the North End Water Pollution Control Centre in September that resulted in raw sewage flowing directly to the river was caused by a broken guide inside a large suction valve.

The valve weighs approximately 8,000 pounds, and is about 12 feet high, 30 inches thick and 50 inches wide. Inside the valve, a cast iron disk, which is 36 inches in diameter, moves up and down along guides as the valve opens and closes. One of the guides was broken, causing the disk to twist and be lodged open by about 12 inches. Barry MacBride, Director of the City's Water and Waste Department, says, "There is no indication at this time as to why the guide broke. We have hired a consultant to study and report on the valve failure. In the meantime, the plant continues to perform well."

A decision will be made next week on whether to have the valve repaired or purchase a new valve.

When the valve was removed on Tuesday, November 19, 2002, representatives of Manitoba Conservation, Environment Canada and the City's independent engineering firm were present.

At about 1:15 pm on Monday, September 16, 2002, the failure shut down the wastewater treatment processes at the North End Water Pollution Control Centre. At about 5:00 pm, sewage began flowing directly into the Red River at a rate of about 185,000 cubic metres per day, or approximately 1% – 1.5% of the river flow. Repairs to the plant progressed quickly, and 57 hours later at approximately 2:00 am on September 19, full wastewater treatment resumed and all flows to the river had ceased.