

Getting to the bottom of it all

Dear Editor,

On a tour of Robert O. Pickard Environmental Centre in early May it was revealed that the cause of the abnormally high E-coli levels in Aug of 2006 was a malfunctioning outflow gate. My first question was why wasn't council told about this and through us the Citizens of Ottawa?

There is no doubt that there was a massive communication breakdown from all levels of city employees to the public. As a consequence Mayor O'Brien, myself and councillors Jellett and Bloess have had a motion passed at council requesting the Auditor General do a formal investiga-

tion uncovering every detail surrounding this issue.

I interested to see what the AG determines is the cause of the communication breakdown and what his recommendations are to resolve this problem ensuring that this situation never happens again. I am pleased though that one of the immediate changes to protocol is that Council is now informed of each potential sewage overflow.

Dixon Weir, director of water and wastewater management, has been sending councillors memos stating that there was or could have been an overflow into the Ottawa River with each significant rainfall.

While I am not happy that

we surcharge into the river, it is better to know about it then to ignore that it is happening. The more that councillors and populace as a whole, is aware of how much waste is discharged, the more that we willing to fix the problem.

I'm also encouraged that the provincial government is looking into this matter, as is the federal government. The more information we have on what happened, the more we can make the necessary changes to see that it never happens again.

Regards,

Bob Monette
City councillor