



FALL 2024

SAMQWAN SAMAQAN + SAGE

Leading progress, innovation, and a long-term solution for water and wastewater management for Atlantic First Nations communities.

The Atlantic First Nations Water Authority (AFNWA) is a not-for-profit, Wabanaki Nations water utility that is owned and operated by First Nations, for First Nations. Our goal is to provide clean drinking water and safe wastewater services to participating First Nations communities.

AFNWA is responsible for the operation, maintenance, and capital upgrades of all water and wastewater assets in each participating First Nations community. We are committed to helping build stronger First Nations communities in Atlantic Canada, and supporting long-term planning initiatives.

PROGRESS UPDATE



Photo credit: John Lam

» **Awards:** Join us in congratulating Operator Samantha Johnson, Potlotek, and Supervisor Andrew Lafford, Eskasoni. Samantha received the *Rising Star Award*, and Andrew the *Silent Hero Award*, at the annual ACWWA Conference in September.

» **New Staff:** We recently welcomed Brent Pierro, as a water & wastewater operator from Wagmatcook, to AFNWA. Brent joins the Unama'ki service area team. Wela'lin for the photo, Brent!



» **Certifications:** The AFNWA would like to congratulate our staff for achieving the following certifications and levels in 2024:

Operator-in-Training: Alex Davis, Alex Marshall, Andrew Lafford, Chris Pictou, Dean Perley, Dillon Francis, Georgina Sock, Jodie MacPhail, Margie Hennigar, Patrick Jeddore, and Virick Francis.

Water Distribution: Alex Davis, Brandon Sock, Dillon Francis, Jeff Wujcik, and Justin Moulton.

Water Treatment: Andrew Lafford, Blade Sylliboy, Dylan Bernard, and Mark Francis; **Water Treatment II:** Andrew Lafford.

Wastewater Collection: Alex Davis, Andrew Lafford, Justin Moulton, and Mark Francis.

Wastewater Treatment: Blade Sylliboy and Jeff Wujcik.

PROGRESS UPDATE

» **AGM:** Our Annual General Meeting was held in person in September. There, AFNWA's member Chiefs appointed Chief Sidney Peters to the Board of Directors. From Glooscap, Chief Sid will serve a four-year term in the role. Chief Darlene Bernard, Lennox Island, was reappointed to serve a second term.



Photo credit: Robyn Crowe

» **Canada-Australia Dialogue Sessions:** In November, James MacKinnon, Director of Engagement & Government Relations introduced AFNWA at the Canada-Australia dialogue sessions. This gathering, hosted by Deputy Minister of Indigenous Services Canada, Gina Wilson, and CEO of the National Indigenous Australians Agency, Jody Broun, strengthens Canada's bilateral relationship with Australia and open continuous dialogue.

» **CBWM & Operator Workshop:** The annual Community Based Water Monitor & Operator Workshop took place on November 19–21 in Millbrook. Participants heard from AFNWA

staff and industry experts on various topics including our oversight standards, waterborne illnesses, and how climate change affects water treatment. The awards dinner celebrated the monitors who completed 100 per cent of their annual sampling and we thank them for their dedicated work. AFNWA thanks our partners at First Nations and Inuit Health Branch for its support for the annual gathering.

» **IRP:** At our November meeting, the Board approved the funding request to initiate the Integrated Resource Plan in accordance with our 10-Year Business Plan. An IRP is a 25-year, comprehensive infrastructure plan to optimize and integrate investments needs related to three strategic drivers: asset renewal, growth, and compliance. This foundational project will require significant community engagement, and we look forward to getting out and chatting with residents in our 13 member communities!

» **Millbrook Water Tower:** Construction continues on the new water tower in Millbrook. Mohamed Osman, Project Engineer, snapped this recent photo! We look forward to the completion of this project in 2025.



Photo credit: Mohamed Osman

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Introducing Chris Fahie, M.A.Sc., P. Eng., AFNWA Director of Engineering

As our dear friend John Lam approaches his well-earned retirement, the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority (AFNWA) undertook an extensive search to find the perfect candidate to lead our Engineering Department.

We are excited to announce that Chris Fahie joined us in September as Director of Engineering.

In his new role, Chris brings 24 years of experience in engineering design, operations, process optimization, asset management, master planning, capital improvement planning, construction contracts, and project management of water and wastewater assets.

Before joining AFNWA, Chris spent a decade with Halifax Water, where he advanced from Project Engineer to Manager of Wastewater Treatment and Quality and

finally to Manager of Process Engineering. His extensive experience in engineering design, project management, and strategic leadership ensures that AFNWA services will continue to be delivered with the highest standards of reliability and efficiency.

Chris holds a Master of Applied Science in Civil Engineering, a Bachelor of Engineering in Environmental Engineering, and a Bachelor of Science in Biology, all from Dalhousie University. He is a licensed Professional Engineer with Engineers Nova Scotia and is an active member of the Water Environment Federation (WEF). Chris also served as the Past Director of Member Involvement on the ACWWA Board for six years.

Before joining our team, Chris honed his expertise with leading consulting engineering firms including Dillon Consulting Ltd., CBCL Ltd., and AECOM across the US and Canada. We are thrilled to have him onboard as we continue to strengthen our work in serving Indigenous communities across the region.

Welcome to the team, Chris!

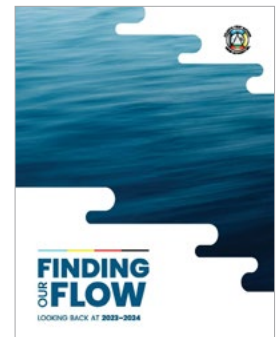
COMMUNICATIONS + OUTREACH

» **Alert App:** In 2025, you can expect changes to our communications delivery to help streamline our service notices to all member communities. With the SimplyCast app, residents can receive advisories and updates through the app, by SMS, by getting a phone call or email—or both. AFNWA will still publish notices on our Facebook page, and you can register now by clicking [here!](#)



» **Annual Report:** *Finding Our Flow*, the 2023–24 review, is now available on the Documents page of our website.

[Download your PDF now!](#)



Reporting emergencies:

Fridge magnets with our emergency contacts were distributed to member communities by our Operations team. Residents can get one at either the health centre or band office, or ask one of the Operators in your community!

For **Neqotkuk & Bilijk** call **(506) 247-1207**

In **Elsipogtog & Lennox Island** call **(506) 247-1209**

And **for all nine NS members**, call **(902) 603-0312**

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