



Aquarian Systems Inc.

Ed Hoepfner

ON-SITE WATER MANAGEMENT & TREATMENT

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Sept. 24, 2006

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Central Saanich Mayor and Council
1903 Mt. Newton X Rd.
Saanichton, B.C.
V8M 2A9

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to lend support and what assistance I am able, to the project:

“Central Saanich Rural/Urban Rainwater Re-use and Self contained Water Systems Project.”

It is my belief that this project should be encouraged and assisted in what ever way possible.

Rainwater harvesting for residential indoor and outdoor use is a way of developing sustainable on-site water management strategies in both a rural and urban setting. In rural areas where ground water supplies are limited, rainwater harvesting can augment low or zero producing summer wells. In urban environments, this practice can help to reduce demand on the municipal potable water supply. This will help to delay the inevitability of increasing the regional reservoir capacity and ensuing requirement to find further sources of water to feed the reservoir.

With increasing watering restrictions in the city, over time, more and more vegetation is disappearing and will continue to disappear. This will have a large social, environmental, and economic impact. With decreased vegetation come higher local temperatures in the summer requiring more use of air conditioners and lower building temperatures to those buildings that lose the wind break value of their vegetation in the winter months. This results in higher energy demand, higher costs, and more greenhouse gas emissions due to energy production. As well, less vegetation means less CO₂ is withdrawn from the atmosphere to support plant growth; this in turn increases air pollution and greenhouse gas levels.

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This phenomenon of decreasing vegetation can be witnessed in local parks where mature shallow rooted trees are dying due to summer watering restrictions. Tourists will be less inclined to come to the garden city if there is no garden. Local residents will be less nourished in spirit by their gardens and parks. Central Saanich council can by encouraging rainwater harvesting help to develop a water supply that can be used, at a minimum, to irrigate and keep alive local landscapes and/or food crops. By encouraging in-house uses, a further reduction in dependence on the local well or municipal supply will be seen.

I recently attended the "Water in the City" conference as a presenter on the subject of: "The Hydro-Lodge-ical Cycle, A Rural Perspective" The presentation reflected more than 10 years of research and development work on Hornby Island, concerning rainwater harvesting and use, storm water management, on-site sewage and greywater treatment using: greenhouses, constructed wetlands, planter boxes, evapotranspiration gardens, and composting toilets. Many of these technologies and processes have direct application to an urban environment. With education, creative financing, and a relaxing of institutional barriers, some of these practices, especially rainwater harvesting, could be included in the toolbox of wise water management options and increase regional sustainability.

Cisterns, plastic or concrete, for rainwater harvesting are now the norm on Hornby Island for new construction and are requested by home owners rather than suggested to them. The water is used for all household purposes and in some instances people use it also for drinking and cooking after suitable filtration.

In support of the proposed project, I am happy to be available in whatever capacity possible to further the success of this project.

Sincerely yours,



Edward Hoepfner
Aquarian Systems Inc.
Hornby Island, B.C.