

Feds fund Senanus water line

Wait for drinking water over

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Irene Booth has been waiting for clean drinking water at her home on Senanus Drive for 47 years now.

"We waited 25 years before building, hoping for water," she said. "Twenty-one years later, the day has come." Booth's home, along with 63 others on Senanus and in the Mount Newton X Road area as far east as Thompson Road, will be connected to two new water mains thanks to \$1.1 million in funding from the Canada-British Columbia Municipal Rural Infrastructure Fund.

"It's nice to be here to see this project finally happen," said Gary Lunn, MP for Saanich-Gulf Islands and Minister of Natural Resources, as he made the funding announcement. "It's so important to have clean, pure drinking water." The Infrastructure Fund is a provincial-federal joint effort, and Lunn was joined at the announcement by Murray Coell, MLA for Saanich North and the Islands, and Ida Chong, Minister of Community Services. The \$1.1 million will help pay for the two new water mains as well as the new residential water meters.

"This funding ensures these residents will have a connection to a source of safe and reliable drinking water," Coell said. "I know people have been waiting 30 and 40 years. I'm looking forward to coming back and drinking a cold, good glass of water."

Coell said that infrastructure funding has already helped with the sewer installation in North Saanich as well as water line improvements in the Gulf Islands. "We're making this the best place to live in the world," he said.

Chong congratulated the home owners and the municipality for their perseverance in bringing forward their request for infrastructure funding. "I'm pleased that our partnership is supporting this, and so many other infrastructure initiatives all around our province," she said. "These projects, one by one, are contributing to a greener, healthier BC."

Booth said she was overjoyed at the news that she would no longer be reliant on well water and the kindness of friends and family. "I carry a five gallon jug in my car and fill it when I visit my daughter in Colwood. That's the way we've managed," she said. Booth, along with other residents of the Senanus Drive area, has been a frequent visitor to council over the years, asking for something to be done about the water situation. "Once I brought in two towels, one that I had washed in our water. It was a white towel, but it was brown and streaky from the water in the well," she said. "The same towel, which my daughter washed in town, was white. The contrast was obvious. The water from the well is not usable, even for laundry." She noted that using well water has corroded appliances, including dishwashers, sinks, and taps. "They're just rusted and worn," she said.

With the funding in place, Central Saanich can now move forward with the next steps.

"If all goes well, engineering will take place in the next quarter," said Central Saanich Mayor Jack Mar. "We hope for construction to begin in 2008."