

March 9, 2020

Ms. Andrea Roberts, Mayor  
Pat Kennedy, Deputy Mayor  
Nancy Wood-Roberts, Councillor Ward 1  
Larry Clarke, Councillor Ward 2  
Tammy Donaldson, Councillor Ward 3  
Mr. John Smith, Councillor Ward 4  
Walt McKechnie, Councillor Ward 5

Municipality of Dysart et al  
P.O. Box 389  
Haliburton, Ontario  
K0M 1S0

Re: Septic Re-inspection Program – Proposed Revisions 2020

The undersigned lake associations have some very serious concerns with the recent direction from Dysart Council to Dysart staff, to develop a revised Septic System Re-inspection Program that excludes the mandatory pump-out as part of the re-inspection. We agree with Council and staff that there are numerous opportunities for improving and streamlining the Septic Re-inspection Program and we would welcome an opportunity for consultation to help to achieve these improvements. However, it is clear that based on the experience during the pilot on the Kennisis Lakes (Area 1) and based on numerous consultations with inspectors, pumpers and septic system experts, a significant number of damaged, leaking and otherwise malfunctioning septic systems will not be properly identified as needing repair or remedial action without the pump-out.

In 2017, when Dysart developed and implemented By-law 2017-101 based on input and advocacy from Lake Associations, the CHA and the broader community, we were proud to be members of a municipality that took the bold step to protect our lakes and watersheds with a robust septic system re-inspection approach.

It appears somewhat irrational, that one of the primary recommendations for changes in the septic re-inspection program is to remove the pump-out when septic systems, in order to function properly, must be pumped out based on use or at some frequency, as a regular maintenance activity. There is a real opportunity here to optimize the inspections and the pump-outs by providing some basic education and advice to residents leading up to the Area 2 and full Dysart by-law implementation.

We wanted to remind you, as our Dysart Councillors, that our Official Plan states that:


1. "The natural environment is the most important attribute of the Municipality,"
2. That its lakes and rivers are critical water resource features, and
3. That the Municipality will "protect and where possible enhance the quality and integrity of these critical water resource features."

Reducing the effectiveness of the current Septic System Re-inspection by-law by removing the pump-out requirement, and potentially leaving many polluting septic systems in operation, is in direct violation of the principles in our Official Plan.

Finally, the KLCOA (Area 1) and the Lake Associations in Area 2 would like to be consulted and included in a full review of the 2018/2019 septic re-inspection pilot program. Although the regular updates on the re-inspection program to Council were helpful and informative, a full report, developed with stakeholder consultation, should be prepared. The report should contain a detailed analysis of the pilot with recommendations for the future of the re-inspection program in Dysart. The focus should be on the best possible outcomes for the health of our lakes and watersheds and not simply directed at the issues with program implementation and execution.

Thank you for considering our position on the septic re-inspection program. We expect you to contact all of us in order to clarify our input and engage our associations in consultation regarding the re-inspection by-law.

Sincerely,



Deb Wratschko, President  
Kennisis Lake Cottage Owners' Association



Richard Luger, President  
Redstone Lake Cottagers Association



Steve Owen, President  
Growler Lake Properties Owners Association



Peter Boag, President  
Lipsy Lake Cottage Owners' Association

cc: Paul MacInnes – Chair, Coalition of Haliburton Property Owners Associations