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# north shore news

## Crappy idea

North Shore News

January 25, 2015 12:00 AM

Have you ever watched someone try to row a boat in two directions at once? If you look out on the Burrard Inlet, you'll see the federal government making a go of it.

Transport Canada is considering giving owners of boats certified for up to 15 passengers the all-clear to dump their onboard raw sewage in the water, as long as they're at least 1.8 kilometres (one nautical mile) away from the shoreline. Another department in the same federal government has told Metro Vancouver it must upgrade all of its sewage plants to secondary treatment standards because primary treatment wasn't good enough.

Talk about mixed messages.

The new Lions Gate Wastewater Treatment Plant is expected to cost \$700 million, and that's just one of those required to be online in Metro Vancouver by 2020. Despite it being a federally mandated project, our MPs have been conspicuously quiet about how much of the cost the federal government is willing to cover. But it is an election year, so don't be surprised if they come riding in to the rescue sometime in the spring or summer.

In the meantime, we say the idea of allowing untreated boat toilet waste into Burrard Inlet stinks something fierce. Our medical health officer has raised the red flag that this could be inviting more of the e.coli problems that rendered our West Vancouver beaches unsafe for swimming for much of last summer.

Who is this intended to benefit? Was having clean beach water really at the top of Transport Canada's list of problems to solve?

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