



**Environment
Office of the Minister**

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Ms. Stella Bowles
(earlgrey@eastlink.ca)

Stella
Dear Ms. Bowles:

Thank you for the August 22, 2016, letter outlining your concerns regarding straight pipes. Premier McNeil has asked me to respond on his behalf, in my capacity as Minister of Environment.

Your participation and demonstrated leadership on this issue has been truly outstanding and as Minister of Environment, I would like to personally congratulate you on your accomplishments.

As you are aware, straight pipes that release raw sewage into the environment present a risk to the environment and human health and from a regulatory perspective straight pipes are illegal. There is no such thing as a straight pipe being "grandfathered" because a property is older. When provided with specific information, Nova Scotia Environment (NSE) investigates and requires property owners to repair or install on-site sewage disposal systems, as necessary. Failure to do so can result in enforcement action.

Over the years, several homes, including many homes along the LaHave River, have installed approved on-site sewage disposal systems. As such, NSE continues to educate the public that straight pipes are not "grandfathered" and are against the law. Currently, Nova Scotia Environment is not notified when a property is sold or changes ownership. We need to receive specific information from the public (which include residents, real estate agents, and the general public) in order to start an investigation.

Nova Scotia Environment will continue to work with all levels of government to ensure the protection of water resources in our province. We have begun discussions with the Municipality of the District of Lunenburg under the current Memorandum of Understanding to work towards a solution to illegal straight pipes.

Once again, thank you for bringing your concerns regarding this important issue to everyone's attention. Your diligence and perseverance are an example to all young people.

Sincerely,

Margaret Miller, MLA
Minister of Environment

c: Stephen McNeil, Premier