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January 31, 2024

File: 6000-30-10; 5770-30-10

Via email: [avicc@ubcm.ca](mailto:avicc@ubcm.ca)

Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities  
525 Government Street  
Victoria BC V8V 0A8

**Re: 2024 Resolution**

Please be advised that on January 17, 2024, the Islands Trust Executive Committee passed the following resolution for the 2024 AVICC Annual General Meeting:

**EC-2024-006**

**It was MOVED and SECONDED,**

That the Executive Committee direct staff to forward a resolution with backgrounder for consideration at the 2024 Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) and Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) conventions, requesting that the Province review the Manual of Composting Toilets and Greywater Practice and provide funding for demonstration projects and professional development for practitioners.

Please find attached the proposed resolution and backgrounder.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require further information.

Yours truly,

David Marlor  
Corporate Secretary

**Attachments:**

1. Islands Trust Resolution re: Composting toilet and greywater practices
2. Islands Trust Backgrounder re Composting toilet and greywater practices

***Preserving and protecting over 450 islands and surrounding waters in the Salish Sea***

Bowen Denman Hornby Gabriola Galiano Gambier Lasqueti Mayne North Pender Salt Spring Saturna South Pender Thetis



## 2024 RESOLUTION SUBMISSION TO UBCM

### COMPOSTING TOILET AND GREYWATER PRACTICES

#### RESOLUTION:

WHEREAS there have been barriers to uptake of alternatives to plumbed sewage disposal systems despite their allowance under the Sewerage System Regulation and the 2016 Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice;

AND WHEREAS these barriers to uptake may include overly conservative requirements (and their application) for onsite application criteria for residuals in the Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that UBCM call upon the Province of British Columbia's Ministry of Health to review the Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice to update the onsite application criteria for residuals based on current scientific knowledge; and provide funding for demonstration projects and for practitioners' professional development on composting toilets and greywater practices.

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## 2024 RESOLUTION SUBMISSION TO UBCM

### COMPOSTING TOILET AND GREYWATER PRACTICES RESOLUTION BACKGROUNDER:

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British Columbia is facing an acute shortage of affordable housing needed to support the long-term sustainability and resilience of local communities. In addition, it is facing the challenges of water scarcity exacerbated by climate change. Many residents in rural areas, including the Islands Trust Area, are not serviced by community sewage systems. Where not serviced by a community system, property owners are responsible for the disposal of liquid waste on their lot(s). Plumbed septic systems have traditionally been considered the most accepted means of addressing all liquid waste and related residuals. Plumbed septic systems require a lot of water and are, in many areas of B.C., expensive or challenging to build. Increased ease of installation and use of approved alternative sewage disposal systems are needed to help support new housing builds, and retrofits to houses that are currently using disposal means which are not supported under the Sewerage System Regulation.

In 2016, the Sewerage System Regulation recognized composting toilets and greywater systems as a sewerage system option, opening a pathway to build more of these systems. These systems must be built and maintained in accordance with the 2016 Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice<sup>1</sup>, under the supervision of either a Registered Onsite Wastewater Practitioner or qualified professional (e.g., wastewater engineer).

Despite the Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice's existence and the need for alternative solutions, there have been barriers to the uptake of composting toilets and greywater practices. The first is that the prescriptive requirements for onsite application criteria for residuals within the Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice are showing to be overly conservative based on scientific knowledge re pathogen decay and phytotoxin control. The second is that some practitioners, including those signing off on the system, may be overly conservative in their interpretation of the Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice due to concerns over risks of these systems in relation to health safety.

This Resolution proposes that the Ministry of Health deal with these barriers by requesting a review of the seven-year-old Manual of Composting Toilet and Greywater Practice, especially regarding the onsite application of criteria for residuals (both for buried and for surface application), to update it based on current scientific knowledge. This Resolution also requests funding to support demonstration projects and professional development opportunities (e.g., through certification bodies, for practitioners on composting toilets and greywater practices including information regarding actual and perceived risks and interpreting the Regulation and Manual).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/environment/waste-management/sewage/provincial-composting-toilet-manual.pdf>