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A disinfection plant at the south sewage lagoons that is part of the Fort St. John's water reclamation project.

Fort St. John councillors want the province to address serious wait times for BC Hydro power connections that have delayed the completion and startup of new city infrastructure.

The city says it has faced lengthy two-year wait times for power connections to the reclaimed water station and skate park washrooms. It's also faced delays this year getting connections into Centennial Park, where public washrooms are also without power.

Council voted Monday to bring the issue with the North Central Local Government Association and the Union of BC Municipalities, and seek their support to lobby the provincial government to fix the problem.

"The Kootenays and Okanagan may have a similar issue," noted Mayor Lori Ackerman.

The city says it has faced unnecessary costs and has lost revenue due to the delays.

The reclaimed water station near the south sewage lagoons was planned to open in November, however, the facility still has yet to be commissioned since power was finally connected in January.

"As a consequence, the City incurred additional expenses for temporary power and contract costs," legislative and administrative services director Janet Prestley noted in a report to council.

"This also resulted in lost revenue to the City since it could not sell effluent water to oil and gas companies over this timeframe and winter is this industry's busiest time of the year."

Power was brought to Centennial Park in October, after freeze up, the report noted, however, there is still no power to the washroom. Meanwhile, the skate park washrooms still can't be used due to ongoing connection delays.

"At the present time, BC Hydro is requiring unreasonable and expensive infrastructure upgrades that will allow this connection to take place," Prestley's report noted.

The city said it also had to expose and replace BC Hydro conduits and wires during the reconstruction of 92A Street.

"This infrastructure was past its useful life and was near failure at the time it was exposed and should not have been a City expense," the report notes.

The NCLGA and UBCM meet annually to discuss pressing policy concerns of local governments, which vote on and pass resolutions that become provincial lobbying priorities.

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