

WAGMATCOOK PROJECT

# Community benefits from water system upgrade

BY ROBERT BAY

**R**esidents of the Wagmatcook First Nation community in Cape Breton are now enjoying clean, pure water thanks to an upgrade of its water system.

The project included a new reservoir (a 3,500 cubic metre, glass-fused-to-steel tank built and installed by Greatario Engineered Storage Systems Limited of Ontario) and new pipes and water lines.

Acting as an intermediary for the Wagmatcook First Nation in the tendering process was Public Works and Government Services Canada (PWGSC).

"Wagmatcook contacted us and requested technical advice, and advice on project management and tendering assistance," says Ian Scelles of PWGSC. "We helped evaluate the bid. It was a very competitive contracting process."

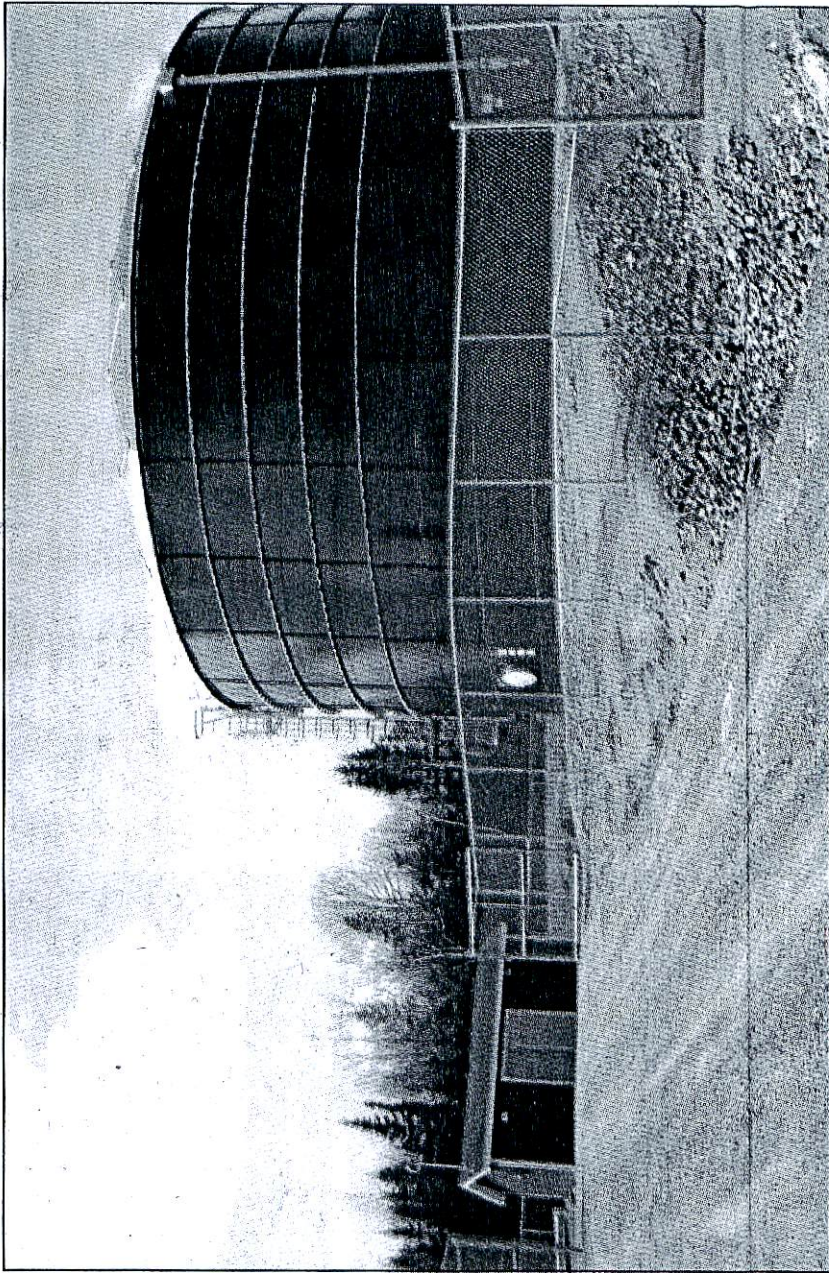
The successful bidders included Greatario as the project's general contractor and Northern Contractors as the sub-contractor. The consulting engineer was from the Sydney branch of Dillon Consulting Engineers. Lynk Electric Ltd., also of Sydney, provided mechanical controls and equipment.

"The consulting engineer reported to us and we acted on behalf of the Wagmatcook Band," Scelles says. "We essentially managed the schedule."

The impetus for the upgrade was an existing water treatment and storage tank that weren't adequate to service the community and create the best quality water possible.

"The old system had a very small welded steel tank that needed to be replaced — it was beyond restoration," says Steve Gregory, vice-president of Greatario. "We built a storage tank, hooked into the new water lines and created a chlorination facility."

Greatario's contribution was one of two phases to the project. The pipes and water lines component was completed by Northern Contracting Ltd. The new facility has been up and running since



The Wagmatcook project included a new reservoir and new pipes and water lines.

Photo courtesy of Greatario

about the first of June, with Greatario having been onsite for about five months previous.

The transition was relatively seamless — an impressive accomplishment given that getting the system up and running was very involved. Readings on the new water treatment system were

taken, ensuring compliance, and challenges in balancing competing pressures were met.

"Getting a continuous, quality water supply flowing to the village was not an easy task," says Dave Howley of Lynk Electric. "We had to get the timing just right."

However, with the high level of company expertise involved, the project was destined to be a success.

"We have established a reputation of being able to offer mechanical, electrical controls and instrumentation skills all under one roof," says Howley. "With those skills, doing an analytical and com-

missioning project like this makes coordination a lot easier. We were able to do this with little interruption to the community."

Howley adds that "Greatario was excellent to work with and its years of experience in bringing these plants online was a true asset".

The end result for the people of Wagmatcook is better quality water, without shortages in the dry seasons, and increased water pressure.

"We've also trained the system operators so they're able to do operational maintenance," says Howley. "It gives the community greater reliability in the water system."

New controls and