



## King County

### **Dow Constantine**

King County Executive

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[www.kingcounty.gov](http://www.kingcounty.gov)

November 28, 2022

The Honorable Claudia Balducci  
Chair, King County Council  
Room 1200  
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

As called for by Ordinance 19210, Section 112, Proviso P4, this letter transmits a report on toxics in King County wastewater effluent, evaluating the presence of toxic elements in the effluent of treatment plants, and a proposed Motion, that would, if enacted, acknowledge receipt of the report.

The enclosed report outlines the results of a scientific study to assess the levels of toxic chemicals in treated wastewater effluent from King County's regional treatment plants and the potential for effects on Southern Resident Orcas and their prey.

King County operates three large regional wastewater treatment plants that serve much of King County and small sections of Pierce and Snohomish counties. The wastewater treatment plants were designed to remove organic material and solids, and to disinfect the effluent to eliminate pathogens. Although some chemicals are removed in these processes, the plants were not specifically designed to remove the types of chemical pollutants that have more recently been recognized as potentially being of concern. The treated wastewater is discharged to Puget Sound as final treated effluent.

In developing the report, King County contracted with an expert scientific research team comprised of members from Washington State University Puyallup Research and Extension Center, University of Washington Tacoma, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to help conduct a study to assess toxic chemicals found in wastewater effluent and in Puget Sound.

The work outlined in this report furthers the King County Strategic Plan goal of a healthy environment, deepening our understanding of the impact of toxics in wastewater on marine life. The research presented in this report enhances understanding of human impacts to water quality and supports the objective of protecting and restoring water quality, biodiversity and ecosystems.

The Honorable Claudia Balducci

November 28, 2022

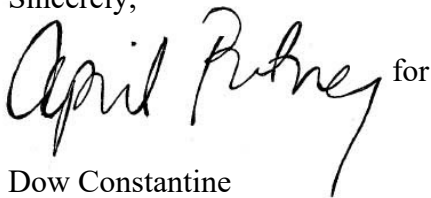
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It is estimated that the report required 115 hours by County staff to produce, costing approximately \$9,085 in staff hours. Consultant costs are estimated to be approximately \$400,000. The estimated printing cost for this report is nominal.

Thank you for your consideration of this report. The important work discussed in the report will support efforts to protect King County waters and further support Southern Resident Orcas, salmon populations, and the health of the Salish Sea.

If your staff have any questions, please contact Kamuron Gurol, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division, Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-477-4825.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine  
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers  
ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff  
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council  
Shannon Braddock, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive  
Karan Gill, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive  
Mina Hashemi, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive  
Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)  
Kamuron Gurol, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD), DNRP