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Mayor wants feds to contribute to plant upgrades

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The Harbour Solutions project may be complete for now, but it's just the beginning, says Mayor Peter Kelly.

It's expected to cost \$90 million to get our waste treatment plants to meet upcoming national standards, and Kelly thinks Ottawa "If the federal government is changing standards across the country, then we also want them to bring some money with them," s

"Don't demand a higher level without bringing the resources to help municipalities get there. It is not going to be a cheap process. Currently the harbour water goes through "advanced primary" treatment, where it is chemically cleaned and disinfected. But new secondary treatment are expected to become law within the next year or two — they're currently before the House of Commons. Secondary treatment involves using bacteria that feed on the sewage. Another step — tertiary treatment — involves putting the v a sand filter.

The \$90 million cost to upgrade would likely be much higher, except the sewage treatment plants were built with upgrades in mir accommodate for secondary treatment.

There may be improvements on the swimming side as well.

The new plants have helped parts of Halifax Harbour reach current safety levels for swimming. Black Rock Beach and Dingle Beac for the first time in decades, but have since been closed twice due to heavy rain causing sewage to leak into the water.

Kelly said this problem should also be alleviated in the coming years as the city works towards separating rainwater from sewage slow stormwater from overflowing.