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Province will help fund Greater Victoria sewage treatment, premier pledges

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The provincial government will help pay for a third of the funding needed for the Capital Regional District to build sewage treatment facilities, Premier Gordon Campbell said today.

A condition of the pledge is that Partnership B.C. will review whether public-private partnerships are possible as part of the project, which is expected to cost hundreds of millions of dollars.

Greater Victoria currently dumps its raw sewage, after screening for solids, directly into the ocean.

The province earlier this year ordered the CRD to start treating the sewage, saying the dumping has become an environmental hazard.

In the past, CRD officials have argued that the dumping was acceptable because ocean currents were safely diluting and dispersing the sewage. But recent studies have found a hazardous concentration of sewage at dumping sites.

The federal government has already pledged to help pay for a third of the cost of sewage treatment, leaving the final third to the area's municipalities.

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