

let's DISCUSS



AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM TIM - YOUR ICE GUY...

Dear Respected Members,

I'm reaching out to hopefully clear the air and answer some questions regarding our chiller replacement initiative at the club. I have been getting asked a lot of questions and I've also corrected some false information that's been floating around. The Parksville Curling club has taken the initiative to form a safety committee regarding the regulations going forward and we've also formed a steering committee to insure we're going about the replacement process properly.

Let me begin with a little background on the situation: The piece of equipment that we need to replace by the beginning of next season is the chiller. It is a large tank, in the engine room, that houses our chilled ammonia and brine. It is responsible for the cooling of our brine before it is pumped out to the lines in the floor beneath the ice. The brine and ammonia are kept separate by brine pipes that run through the ammonia in the chiller.

With last year's tragedy in Fernie, where 3 people died in an ammonia leak, was the result of a faulty and aged chiller. Since then, the perspectives and safety precautions have shifted in the refrigeration industry. In the past, the further operation of Fernie's 30 year old chiller was not uncommon in its condition. But, because of the age of their chiller, there had been corrosion on one of the brine pipes, thus causing the ammonia to penetrate the brine. Then, through a series of events, it was responsible for the untimely deaths of 3 people. We were very lucky that there haven't been other accidents in the past. This has also resulted in our province's safety branches to tighten up and be more strict with the regulations around ammonia chillers.

That being said, there is nothing wrong with our chiller. We have done extensive testing to it to confirm its integrity and everything has come back fine. There are zero safety concerns with our current chiller. The reason for needing a replacement is the age of our chiller. It is 18 years old and the manufacturer implemented lifespan of the equipment is 20 years.



THE CHILLER AND I

With our chiller being close to its end of life, Technical Safety BC (the refrigeration industry's governing body) is requiring further extensive testing to be done to it for the next couple of years, if we choose to run with our current chiller. The testing can run between \$30,000-\$45,000 each year with a replacement needing to be done in 2020. With the purchase of a new chiller for \$120,000-\$150,000, we will not have to worry about another replacement for 30 years or further testing for another 10 years. We also reduce the amount of ammonia in the system, which will be safer to operate, and greater efficiency with a smaller charge will reflect nicely on our hydro bills going forward.

With all of this coming to light, it has presented the club with the challenge of raising the funds for a new chiller. Since our club's inception, we have always taken pride in our club and membership. Our volunteer power is second to none and recognized throughout the province's and country's curling community. We have always come together to tackle whatever situation was presented to us and this is no different. We need everyone's support going forward. Whether it's continuing to curl at our facility or diving head first into various initiatives, we're grateful for your support and contributions.