



## FAQs regarding the Oakbank plant project

July 28, 2022

### What does Berger do?

Founded in 1963, Berger is a **third-generation family business** that specializes in **peat and growing media**. It has developed a network that includes 11 harvesting sites and 8 production plants in North America. Berger provides professional producers with a **primary resource for growing fruits, vegetables and other plants**.

### Why did Berger choose the Springfield area?

**The answer is very simple: As a Canadian company with an established plant in Hadashville and a harvesting site in Deer Lake, Springfield is a great location based on several factors.**

#### Geographic location:

- The peat is harvested up north in Deer Lake, packaged in Hadashville—and eventually here—and then sold to greenhouse growers located in Western Canada and North-Central US, so the location is logistically efficient.
- The Oakbank plant will also allow us to better serve our Canadian and US customers with greater flexibility as and when required.

#### Proximity with partners and labour force:

- It goes without saying that today's most invaluable resource is definitely our employees. Having access to a qualified labour pool is key.
- The significant presence of service providers (carriers, heavy equipment dealers, industrial and safety furniture suppliers) makes Springfield a prime location to establish our plant.

### Will the traffic generated by the new plant be an issue?

Based on our customers' needs and production capacity, we have estimated 25 trucks per day. For comparison, this transport activity is similar to what a Sobeys would generate and represents just a quarter of the traffic generated by a gravel pit. This is also Berger's 9<sup>th</sup> processing plant, and we've never had any concerns raised about this specific issue anywhere else.

### Will Berger's operations have an impact on municipal wells?

Berger's operations will have no significant impact on the water supply in the area. We have established a plan that includes monitoring the water table levels at the site.

Berger also developed a Groundwater Interference Plan as part of its licencing process to ensure nearby residential wells are not affected.



Berger's wells have been drilled down to the carbonate rock aquifer, the largest freshwater aquifer in the province. This aquifer extends about 1.4 million km throughout a significant portion of Manitoba and into the US.

### **How much water will Berger be using at the facility?**

As per its water rights licence, Berger is limited to 100 dam<sup>3</sup> (100 million litres) per year for its operations. Berger also needs to submit its yearly water uptake to the Drainage and Water Rights Licensing Section. To compare, large industries are permitted up to 100,000 dam<sup>3</sup> (100 billion litres) per year (<https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/water/water-rights/water-use/index.html>).

### **Will the plant emit any bad smells?**

There won't be any odours emitted by the plant. Berger produces growing substrate for agriculture and horticulture usage. The substrate's main ingredient is dried peat, which does not emit any strong or bad odours.

### **Will the facility be in operation all the time?**

The Berger facility is currently only running two shifts per day and is not in operation 24/7. The agriculture and horticulture industry demand is growing and fluctuating rapidly, so we will, so we will adapt accordingly to the industry and market evolution. . Berger will respect the RM's by-laws (<https://www.rmofspringfield.ca/p/by-laws>) and its Environmental Licence obligations (<https://www.gov.mb.ca/sd/eal/registries/6055berger/index.html>)

### **Will Berger release any chemical contaminants into the environment?**

No contaminants will be released into the environment. Industrial wastewater is stored in holding tanks and appropriately handled by a certified third-party. Domestic wastewater is handled through a normal septic installation.

### **Will the facility be noisy?**

We are equipped with noise-cancelling systems that limit sound propagation.

Most of the noise generated will originate from inside the building, which is heavily insulated for this purpose. Outdoor equipment such as loaders and lifts are all equipped with white-noise back-up beepers to reduce sound propagation. As per its environmental licence, Berger will be monitoring noise levels at the borders of its property to ensure it does not constitute a nuisance.

Springfield's by-laws stipulate strict regulations regarding noise nuisance, and all installations must be compliant.

### **Will the facility's operations generate dust in the neighbourhood?**

The likelihood of being inconvenienced by peat dust is incredibly low. and we will be monitoring and



controlling air emissions. As with noise, most of the dust is contained within the building, which is equipped with an industrial dust collector. As per its environmental licence, Berger will also be monitoring air emissions at the borders of its property to ensure dust does not constitute a nuisance.

### **Will Berger's operations carry an increased risk of fire?**

Our key concern has always been and will continue to be the health and safety of our employees, communities and customers. Therefore, all precautions have been taken to minimize any risk of fire. As we've been established in Manitoba since 2008, we are also very familiar with specific provincial requirements.

- The building has been built with firewalls to ensure any potential fire incident is contained.
- A thorough emergency plan has been devised in collaboration with the fire department to manage and prevent any outbreaks of fire.
- Our internal team members are well trained in order to react promptly and rigorously in the event of an incident. Fire drills are also scheduled.
- A large water source has been provided on site, which can be immediately accessed at any time.

#### OHS programmes:

- We cover all aspects of occupational health and safety, which are developed according to the requirements of Safe Work Manitoba and other applicable standards.
- Examples include machine safety (lockout), WHMIS (SIMDUT), working at heights, confined space programmes, physical health (noise), job hazard analysis and more.
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#### Training components:

- When inducting and integrating new employees, we review OHS components.
- As part of on-the-job training, we provide task-specific OHS training and safe work instructions.
- There is a Joint OHS Committee that holds monthly meetings.

Berger is completely self-reliant in terms of its firefighting abilities.