

### Séwllkwe Tracking Solutions: Created by First Nations for all nations

In 2000, Canada's worst E.coli contamination broke out in Walkerton, Ontario, leaving hundreds of people sick and tragically taking the lives of seven people. Realizing that those seven deaths could have been prevented if local residents had only known about the harmful bacteria's presence in their water system, Trevor Andrew felt compelled to take action.

Andrew, who is Secwepemc First Nations and resides in the Adams Lake Band near Shuswap, was working in the trades as a certified electrician and carpenter at the time. After reading the full Walkerton court case, he devoted himself to learning about water-site management and educating others to be accountable for the natural resources surrounding them.

Empowered by his new depth of knowledge, Andrew became a certified water operator in 2005, making him qualified to test and treat water, repair water management equipment, and monitor data. Through that work, he realized that communities could take water management into their own hands if only they had the right tools to access and understand water-quality data. That tool would eventually become Séwllkwe Tracking Solutions Ltd. – named after the Secwepemc word for water.

Séwllkwe began in 2007 as a simple Microsoft Excel spreadsheet with accompanying instructions for how to manage water sources. Not long after, Andrew found a small community of 300 people to test his instructions, and together they were successful in reducing their water consumption by 20 million litres in a single year.

With his pilot project a success, in 2010 Andrew was ready to invest fully in Séwllkwe. He saw technology was the missing link that could further simplify water monitoring and management, making it easily accessible for small communities.

Andrew found a programmer to evolve his spreadsheet and instructions into an app that he says is as easy to use as logging into Facebook from a mobile device or computer. The cloud-based app lets users enter data points from watershed to tap, such as coliform levels, and schedule maintenance tasks for their water-treatment systems. From there, data is easily transmitted to stakeholders through alerts or by generating instant water quality reports. The Séwllkwe app also makes water data easier to understand through graphs and visualizations.

Fast forward to the spring of 2017, when Andrew was recognized by the BC Water and Waste Association for his ingenuity and proficiency in water treatment by being awarded the Victor M. Terry Operator Award for Excellence in the Water and Waste Industry.

After dedicating so many years to learning, researching and establishing Séwllkwe, Andrew remains driven by the passion he developed growing up surrounded by the fresh water lakes and rivers of B.C.'s Southern Interior, noting, "when you love it, you just do it."