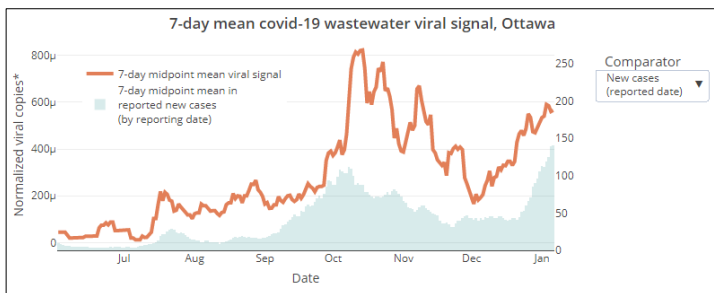


COVID-19: Follow the lead of the food industry Part 4 of 4 December 2020

☀️ Upcycling sewage wastewater

An Ottawa-based medical, scientific and academic consortium 613covid.ca has been able to [upcycle](#) sewage wastewater as a harbinger of COVID-19 cases and community spread. As explained “wastewater surveillance consistently captures most of the population with covid-19 given that everyone goes to the washroom.” For example, viral content of wastewater parallels or precedes documented cases:



Referred to as “wastewater epidemiology”, scientific understanding of this area of study as it applies to COVID-19 is evolving, as adjustments are made to account for differing sewage sanitation systems and laboratory protocol.

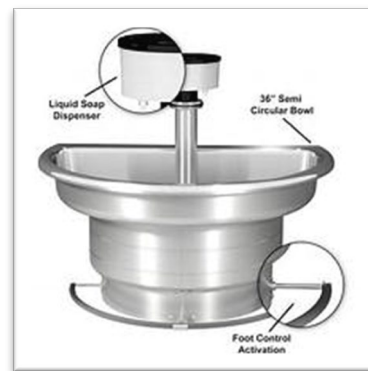
☀️ USA's National Wastewater Surveillance System (NWSS)

The USA's CDC and HHS, along with other US public health agencies are spearheading a similar undertaking on a national level. Described as [a new public health tool to understand COVID-19 spread in a community](#), the website provides guidelines and direction to interested stakeholders, along with a list of advantages and infrastructure pre-requisites:

- Sewage testing has been successfully used as a method for early detection of other diseases, such as polio.
- [COVID-19] can be shed in the feces of individuals with symptomatic or asymptomatic infection; therefore, wastewater surveillance can capture data on both [...].
- Nearly 80 percent of United States households are served by municipal sewage collection systems.
- [COVID-19] RNA detection in sewage serves as a COVID-19 indicator that is independent of healthcare-seeking behaviors and access to clinical testing.
- Depending on the frequency of testing, sewage surveillance can be a leading indicator of changes in COVID-19 burden in a community.

☀️ A different type of surveillance

It is becoming common to see handwashing stations placed **outside** staff and visitor washrooms in food sector premises. Case in point, a Nashville, TN distribution centre which carries both food and non-food items has a foot-pedal activated, automatic soap dispenser sink, so situated.



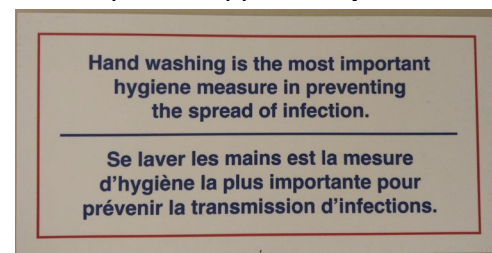
Not really high-tech; actually an ancient innovation



A Scarborough, ON food manufacturer has focused a surveillance camera on its publicly-visible sinks.

☀️ Public demonstration and education

Almost 12 months into the pandemic, instructional posters pervade washrooms throughout the food sector and in public buildings, the latter posted by property owners and managers. Almost prescient, below, from the ladies' washroom of Ottawa International Airport, snapped in **April 2019**.



☀️ Handwashing access for the homeless

Early in the pandemic, April 2020, the Starbuck's Foundation funded the installation of [community handwashing stations](#) in Philadelphia, USA.

