



Public Health
Santé publique
SUDBURY & DISTRICTS

October 16, 2024

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Honourable Minister Sylvia Jones
Minister of Health
Ministry of Health
5th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M5G 2C8

Michael Sherar
President and Chief Executive Officer
Public Health Ontario
661 University Avenue, Suite 1701
Toronto, ON M5G 1M1

Dear Minister Jones and Mr. Sherar:

Re: Support for Ontario to continue to protect the safety of private drinking water

At its meeting on September 19, 2024, the Board of Health carried the following resolution [#48-24](#):

WHEREAS twenty-two percent of households within the Public Health Sudbury & Districts service area rely on private drinking water systems; and

WHEREAS it is recommended that drinking water be tested frequently to ensure that it is safe for human consumption; and

WHEREAS exposure to contaminated drinking water can lead to severe gastrointestinal illness and in rare cases may result in death; and

Sudbury

1300 rue Paris Street
Sudbury ON P3E 3A3
t: 705.522.9200
f: 705.522.5182

Elm Place

10 rue Elm Street
Unit / Unité 130
Sudbury ON P3C 5N3
t: 705.522.9200
f: 705.677.9611

Sudbury East / Sudbury-Est

1 rue King Street
Box / Boîte 58
St.-Charles ON P0M 2W0
t: 705.222.9201
f: 705.867.0474

Espanola

800 rue Centre Street
Unit / Unité 100 C
Espanola ON P5E 1J3
t: 705.222.9202
f: 705.869.5583

Île Manitoulin Island

6163 Highway / Route 542
Box / Boîte 87
Mindemoya ON P0P 1S0
t: 705.370.9200
f: 705.377.5580

Chapleau

34 rue Birch Street
Box / Boîte 485
Chapleau ON P0M 1K0
t: 705.860.9200
f: 705.864.0820

toll-free / sans frais

1.866.522.9200

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WHEREAS anyone can become ill from drinking contaminated water; however, children, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems are at a higher risk of the harmful effects; and

WHEREAS Public Health Ontario's Well Water Testing program is a publicly-funded service that tests water samples from private drinking water sources for indicators of bacterial contamination; and

WHEREAS testing drinking water quality at private laboratories can be cost prohibitive; and

WHEREAS Public Health Ontario in conjunction with the Ministry of Health has proposed joint modernization plans in 2017 and again in January 2023 that proposed discontinuing well water testing as part of a plan to streamline operations; and

WHEREAS the Auditor General of Ontario in its December 6, 2023 [Value-for-Money Audit: Public Health Ontario](#), called for Public Health Ontario and the Ministry of Health to move forward with streamlining laboratory operations in consideration of the proposed modernization plans; and

WHEREAS Public Health Ontario and the Ministry of Health have not yet announced a final plan for streamlining laboratory operations at this time;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Health for Public Health Sudbury & Districts strongly recommends to the Minister of Health and to Public Health Ontario that Ontario's Well Water Testing program be continued in the plan to implement streamlined laboratory operations, and That the Board of Health endorse the resolutions adopted by the Council of the Town of Gore Bay (May 14, 2024), the Council of the Corporation of Northeastern Manitoulin & the Islands (May 23, 2024), and the Council of Central Manitoulin (July 8, 2024) concerning provincial well water testing.

Exposure to contaminated drinking water can cause debilitating gastrointestinal illness, particularly in children, older adults and people with weakened immune systems. Close to one quarter of households within Public Health Sudbury & Districts service area rely on private drinking water systems. For these residents, drinking water testing is the only way to know if their drinking water is safe.

For the well-being of residents, our Board of Health support the continuation of Ontario's publicly funded Well Water Testing program and affirm resolutions adopted by the Council of the Town of Gore Bay (May 14, 2024), the Council of the

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Corporation of Northeastern Manitoulin & the Islands (May 23, 2024), and the Council of Central Manitoulin (July 8, 2024) concerning provincial well water testing.

Maintaining publicly-funded drinking water testing is a needed service that protects many Ontarians utilizing private drinking water systems. Thank you for your attention to this important issue.

Sincerely,



René Lapierre

Chair, Board of Health

cc: Dr. M. M. Hirji, Acting Medical Officer of Health and Chief Executive Officer
Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health
Local Municipalities
Ontario Boards of Health
France Gélinas, Member of Provincial Parliament, Nickel Belt
Jamie West, Member of Provincial Parliament, Sudbury
Michael Mantha, Member of Provincial Parliament, Algoma – Manitoulin
Association of Local Public Health Agencies



May 14, 2024

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON M7A 1A1
Via Email: premier@ontario.ca

Dear Premier Ford:

Re:Public Health Ontario proposes phasing out free water testing for private wells

Please be advised that the Council of the Town of Gore Bay adopted the following resolution at their meeting of May 13, 2024, regarding the above noted matter;

15772

Moved by Kelly Chaytor

Seconded by Rob Dearing

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Gore Bay Council supports the Township of Archipelago's request to the Province of Ontario to reconsider and ultimately decide against the proposed phasing out of free private drinking water testing services;

FURTHER, this resolution is circulated to all Ontario municipalities, the Minister of Health, and Sudbury District Health Unit.

Carried

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stasia Carr'.

Stasia Carr
Clerk

Cc:

Minister of Health sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org

Sudbury District Health Unit sutcliffep@phsd.ca

Ontario Municipalities



May 23, 2024

Bradford West Gwillimbury
100 Dissette Street
Units 7 & 8
Box 100
Bradford, Ontario
L3Z 2A7

Thank you for bringing your resolution to our attention. Well water testing is an important need of many of our residents as well.

Council reviewed your resolution and passed the following motion in support with a slight change for our region.

Resolution No. 114-05-2024

Moved by: L. Cook

Seconded by: M. Erskine

RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Northeastern Manitoulin and the Islands supports the well water testing resolution put forth by Brandford west Gwillimbury and further that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Manitoulin Sudbury Health Unit.

Carried

Thank you

Pam Myers

Clerk



6020 Highway 542, P.O. Box 420
Mindemoya, ON POP 1S0
Tel:705-377-5726
Fax:705-377-5585
Email: ddeforge@centralmanitoulin.ca

July 8, 2024

The Honourable Doug Ford
Premier of Ontario
Legislative Building, Queen's Park
Toronto, ON. M7A 1A1

Via Email: premier@ontario.ca

Dear Premier Ford,

RE: PUBLIC HEALTH ONTARIO PROPOSES PHASING OUT FREE WATER TESTING FOR PRIVATE WELLS

Please be advised that the Council of the Municipality of Central Manitoulin adopted the following resolution at their meeting of June 27, 2024, regarding the above noted matter;

Resolution # 200-2024

Moved by: Councillor D. Stephens

Seconded by: Councillor Mitchell

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Central Manitoulin Council supports the Township of Archipelago's request to the Province of Ontario to reconsider and ultimately decide against the proposed phasing out of free private drinking water testing services;

FURTHER, this resolution is circulated to all Ontario municipalities, the Minister of Health, and Sudbury District Health Unit...Carried

Please contact our office should you require further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Denise Deforge", is written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.

Ms. Denise Deforge
CAO/Clerk

cc. Minister of Health sylvia.jones@pc.ola.org
Sudbury District Health Unit sutcliffep@phsd.ca
Ontario Municipalities