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**For Information**

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**REPORT TITLE:**     **2020 Annual Drinking Water Systems Summary Report**

**FROM:**             Andrea Warren, Interim Commissioner of Public Works

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**OBJECTIVE**

To provide an update on the status of regulatory compliance for the Region's drinking water systems under Ontario Regulation 170/03 (O.Reg.170/03) under the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002 (the Act)*.

**REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- Compliance with the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002* requires the preparation of a drinking water systems Summary Report for Regional Council by March 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.
  - The Region of Peel achieved the compliance with its obligations under the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*, and with the requirements of all legislated approvals for municipal water systems, with the exception of the instances summarized in Appendix I to this report, which did not adversely impact drinking water safety.
  - The Region of Peel continues to provide high-quality drinking water with excellent performance ratings in the 2020 inspections.
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**DISCUSSION**

**1. Background**

Under Schedule 22 of O.Reg.170/03, the owner of a municipal drinking water system must prepare a Summary Report for the Municipality and present it to the municipality's council by March 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. The report must disclose compliance with the terms and conditions of Licenses, Permits and the requirements of the *Act*, and its Regulations. The regulatory requirements that the drinking water system failed to meet must be summarized, and the measures taken to correct these failures described.

Under the *Act*, through Compliance and Enforcement Regulation (O.Reg.242/05), the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (the Ministry) has an oversight role in protecting municipal drinking water in Ontario. The Ministry is responsible for inspecting all municipal residential drinking water systems annually to confirm compliance with the regulatory mandates. All inspection findings are consolidated into an inspection report, scored, and issued to the drinking water system owner.

The Ministry inspection framework includes voluntary correction of non-compliance findings and when needed, an escalated approach with issuance of a formal order to correct the

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problem. Lack of response to an order or continued engagement in significant non-compliant activities may result in charges under the *Act*.

### 2. Statement of Compliance with the Requirements of the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*

The *Act* sets out enforceable requirements and expectations for drinking water system owners to ensure protection of public health and prevention of drinking-water health hazards through controls of water systems, routine monitoring and water testing as well as procedural adherence.

The Region of Peel regularly assesses existing and potential risks to its drinking water systems (described further below), prioritizing threats according to consequence or severity of outcomes. This activity results in identifying corrective actions and putting preventative measures in place.

Occasionally, operational data collection and process documentation errors may result in non-compliance with the legislation. These administrative oversights pose minimal or no risk to the safety of drinking water supply and integrity of water systems. The Region's response to all events is consistent, with the root cause of the problem examined and an immediate problem-solving approach applied. Where required, improvements that involve longer-term planning are implemented to prevent an event from reoccurring.

In 2020, the Region demonstrated compliance with the legislative requirements except for the events summarized in Appendix I. These occurrences were not associated with the safety of drinking water supplied to consumers and the Ministry inspections rated them with low risk to the overall performance of water systems.

Review of 2020 drinking water volumes produced, and water flow rates demonstrated compliance with the Permit to Take Water and the capability of the drinking water systems to meet existing demands.

The overview of the drinking water systems performance was documented in the 2020 Summary Report, which has been posted on the Region's water quality webpage <http://www.peelregion.ca/pw/water/quality/reports/>

### 3. 2020 Water Quality Reports

O.Reg.170/03 under the *Act* prescribes requirements to monitor, test and report drinking water quality information. Every year, a report must be prepared for the preceding calendar year that presents the overall quality of drinking water supply, events of adverse test results, and corrective actions taken. The report must be made available to the public by February 28<sup>th</sup> of each year.

As required, 2020 Water Quality Reports have been prepared for each of Peel's drinking water systems and made available to the public on the Region of Peel website <http://www.peelregion.ca/pw/water/quality/reports/> Paper copies of the reports can be obtained upon request.

The Region's Community Lead Testing Program, prescribed by O.Reg.170/03, requires Peel to collect and test several water samples from residential properties and the water distribution system. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated public health recommendations, private tap water sampling was suspended beginning in March 2020 until

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year end. Water samples from the distribution system were collected as required and the data trend compiled since the program's establishment in 2008 indicates no elevated lead level concern in the Region's water supplies.

All annual reports confirm that the Region of Peel has maintained its commitment to provide high quality drinking water to consumers throughout the reporting period.

### 4. Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks Annual Inspections

Every year, all five municipal drinking water systems in the Region undergo an extensive inspection by the Ministry. These recurring inspections verify that the Region meets sampling, testing and treatment standards, staff competency requirements, and that water systems are operated in compliance with provincial legislation.

In addition, Regional staff have established regular compliance checks at drinking water facilities that identify any inconsistencies with compliance requirements. Significant findings and self-declared non-compliance events are corrected immediately and reported to the Ministry and the Medical Officer of Health, which demonstrate transparency and promotes trust with the province and the local Public Health Unit.

In 2020, following the declaration of the COVID-19 state of emergency, the Ministry allowed some operational flexibility through issuance of an emergency interim regulation (O.Reg. 75/20). This provided for implementation of mandatory control measures to protect the health and safety of staff and customers. Some of the temporary provisions under this regulation included extension of renewal dates for operating certificates and changes to water testing locations and redeployment of qualified staff.

The Ministry inspection for the 2020 year is still underway for one of the Region's water treatment plants. Inspection results received to date have demonstrated an excellent rating. The ratings are summarized as follows:

Drinking Water System / Water Works	2020 Ministry Inspection Rating
Caledon Village – Alton	97.28%
Palgrave – Caledon East	97.69%
Cheltenham	100%
Inglewood	100%
Arthur P. Kennedy Water Treatment Plant	<sup>a</sup>
Lorne Park Water Treatment Plant	97.24%
South Peel Distribution	94.50%

<sup>a</sup> The Ministry Inspection is still underway for the Arthur P. Kennedy Water Treatment Plant.

A summary of all inspection ratings will be presented to Council by means of this report supplemented by a future water and wastewater regulatory programs update planned for late summer 2021. This update will also include a summary of wastewater annual performance reports, which are being prepared for submission to the Ministry by March 31<sup>st</sup>.

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### CONCLUSION

The Region of Peel has maintained compliance with the terms and conditions of all Licences, Permits, the *Act* and its Regulations except for a very small number of non-health related events summarized in the attached Appendix I. These events did not compromise the integrity of the drinking water supply or public health, appropriate action has been taken, and control measures implemented to prevent reoccurrence of the events.

Drinking water systems continued to operate effectively throughout 2020 amid added demands resulting from safety measures implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. To safeguard the health of staff and the public, activities that require staff to enter private premises will remain on hold and will be reassessed in summer 2021.

The Region of Peel is committed to the ongoing provision of high-quality drinking water to its consumers and to maintain compliance with all applicable legislative requirements.

### APPENDICES

#### Appendix I - Summary of Operational and Administrative Non-Compliance Events 2020

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#### ***Reviewed and/or approved in workflow by:***

Department Commissioner and Division Director.