

For Immediate Release

New Water Testing Program Begins in December Provincial Legislation Enhancements Proactively Carried Out in Cambridge

Cambridge, Ontario. Friday, November 23, 2007...A new program to test drinking water will commence in Cambridge in mid-December in keeping with new legislation from the Ministry of Environment (MOE). A staff report today says the City will begin a proactive program to analyze lead levels in the community drinking water, a heavy metal which can occur naturally in the environment.

"While there have not been any problems revealed in our water system relating to unacceptable lead levels, this program continues to put in place safety measures to ensure the controls of the public drinking water and meets the enhanced provincial regulations," says Ed Kovacs, Commissioner of Transportation and Public Works for Cambridge. The MOE introduced the new legislation around Drinking Water Systems about four months ago.

The program will be undertaken between December 15 and April 15 in the first phase. The second samplings will occur between June 15 and October 15, 2008. Random, city-wide samples will be collected which include some 100 residential tests as well as samples from non-residential buildings like arenas. There will also be water collected from the distribution systems to complete the variety of tests needed to thoroughly evaluate the full spectrum of water sources in Cambridge.

Kovacs adds that residents will be notified by letter a few weeks before the sampling staff is planning a visit. City staff will determine sampling areas as the program commences.

Water is supplied to The City of Cambridge by the Region of Waterloo through a network of wells, treatment plants, pumping stations, control valves, and reservoirs. There is a 24-hour on-line monitoring system that is operated through the Regional System Control and Data Acquisition System. When it comes to the distribution of the water, The City of Cambridge maintains and operates 469 km of watermains with 411 km of those pipes owned by Cambridge and the remainder being shared with The Region of Waterloo. There are approximately 37,200 service connections supplying water to the community.

The Safe Drinking Water Act was passed by government in 2002. It covers elements such as accreditation, municipal drinking water systems, water testing, inspections and enforcement. The recent amendments were passed on July 26, 2007.

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For More Information Contact:
Ed Kovacs, Commissioner, Transportation & Public Works
City of Cambridge
kovacse@city.cambridge.on.ca

or

Jamie Austin, Manager of Operations Compliance,
City of Cambridge
austinj@city.cambridge.on.ca
(519) 621-0740

A Fact Sheet entitled "Lead and Your Drinking Water" may be obtained by contacting the Region of Waterloo Public Health office at (519) 883-2008.

The City of Cambridge is one of the fastest growing areas in the country. It is strategically located astride highway 401 in Southwestern Ontario, part of Canada's Technology Triangle. In 2007, the population reached over 124,000 people with a multicultural mix and a strong foundation of support services. Cambridge has a diverse economic base with leading industries in manufacturing, automotive, high technology, pharmaceutical, business and financial services and hospitality/retail. The Corporation of the City of Cambridge is an employer with a work environment that offers the opportunity to provide service to the community through creativity and innovation, and with opportunities for career growth and advancement.

For more information on the area or the corporation visit www.city.cambridge.on.ca