

Township of Southgate

Administration Office

185667 Grey County Road 9, RR 1
Dundalk, ON N0C 1B0



Phone: 519-923-2110
Toll Free: 1-888-560-6607
Fax: 519-923-9262
Web: www.southgate.ca

April 18, 2024

Re: Auditor General of Public Health Ontario Recommendation on Private Drinking Water Testing

Please be advised that at their April 17, 2024, Council meeting, the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Southgate approved the following:

No. 2024-194

Moved By Deputy Mayor Dobreen

Seconded By Councillor Ferguson

Whereas private water systems are not protected through legislated requirement under the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002* and *Clean Water Act, 2005*, but are more likely to contribute to cases of gastrointestinal illness than municipal systems; and

Whereas the 2023 Auditor General's Value-for-Money audit of Public Health Ontario (PHO) recommend that, PHO, in conjunction with the Ministry of Health, update and implement a plan to streamline public health laboratory operations, including the gradual discontinuance of free private drinking water testing; and

Whereas in Saugeen, Grey Sauble, Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Region, about 60,000 residents (35% of the region's population) do not receive water from municipal systems, with many relying on a private drinking water system, including wells; and

Whereas the Walkerton Inquiry Report Part 2, concluded the privatization of laboratory testing of drinking water samples contributed directly to the E. coli outbreak in Walkerton, Ontario in May 2000; and

Whereas all Ontarians deserve safe, clean water and free well water testing is a way to help ensure that residents on private wells continue to have barrier free access to well water testing;

Therefore be it resolved that the Council of the Township of Southgate receive the Drinking Water Protection – Auditor General's of Public Health Ontario Recommendation on Private Drinking Water Testing correspondence for information (see attached); and

That the Council call on the Province to **not** phase out free well water testing as part of the proposed streamlining efforts of public health laboratory operations in the

province; and

That this resolution, along with the correspondence from the Drinking Water Source Protection, be circulated to the Hon. Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health; Hon. Lisa Thompson, Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs; Hon. Andrea Khanjin, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks; Kirsten Service, Director Conservation and Source Protection Branch MoECP; Grey Bruce and other Public Health Units; Ontario Municipalities, Grey and Bruce Federations of Agriculture; Conservation Ontario and Ontario Source Water Protection Committees.

Carried

If you have any questions, please contact our office at (519) 923-2110 ext. 230.

Sincerely,



Lindsey Green, Clerk
Township of Southgate

Incl: Drinking Water Source Protection – Auditor General’s of Public Health Ontario
Recommendation on Private Drinking Water Testing

cc: The Honourable Sylvia Jones, Minister of Health
The Honourable Lisa Thompson, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
The Honourable Andrea Khanjin, Minister of the Environment, Conservation and
Parks
Kristen Service, Director, Conservation and Source Protection Branch MoECP
Grey Bruce Public Health and all other Public Health Units
Grey and Bruce Federations of Agriculture
Conservation Ontario
Source Water Protection Committees