



**Public Works**

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Website: [www.county.oxford.on.ca](http://www.county.oxford.on.ca)

May 25, 2007

James Timlin, Clerk Administrative Officer  
Town of Ingersoll  
130 Oxford Street  
2nd Floor  
Ingersoll, ON  
N5C 2V5

**RE: Lead in Drinking Water**

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Dear Mr. Timlin:

Over the past several weeks there has been increased media and Provincial government attention on the potential presence of lead in municipal drinking water systems. This letter is intended to provide County and area municipal staff with the background on these concerns and how Oxford County is responding.

Current provincial regulations require that drinking water distribution systems are tested for lead once per year. None of Oxford County's 19 drinking water systems have exceeded the provincial standard of 0.010 mg/L in this testing. Unlike larger systems with dedicated sampling stations within the distribution system, Water Services staff have collected many of these samples from the internal plumbing of residential or public buildings. This procedure means our results may be more representative of customers' plumbing effects.

The current concerns over lead concentrations in drinking water stem from lead pipes installed prior to 1960. Much of the municipal infrastructure has been replaced; however lead service pipes and internal plumbing may still be present on private property. The presence of lead pipes is a particular concern where the water chemistry has a low alkalinity and low pH. This type of chemistry, often found in surface water, has been found to be more corrosive to metal pipes and enhances the leaching of the lead into the drinking water. In Oxford County our ground water sources typically have high alkalinity and high pH, and as such at first glance this does not appear to be an issue.

There may also be some concern with the lead solder used until the mid-1980s to seal joints on water mains and plumbing as well as the lead content in some private plumbing fixtures. To confirm there are no widespread lead concerns in our water systems and to re-assure our

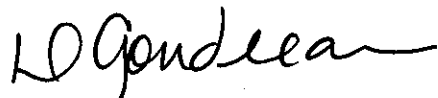
customers, the County will be undertaking some targeted sampling of older areas of our drinking water systems. County Water Services, Board of Health staff, and distribution system Operators from the Town of Tillsonburg and City of Woodstock will be meeting over the next few days to develop the testing program.


If any exceedances are found, the homeowners will be notified along with representatives of the Board of Health and Ministry of the Environment. Should widespread exceedances be found, the testing program will be expanded to better delineate any problem.

The information contained in this letter has been shared with local media that have contacted us. More information will be disseminated as the work plan is developed and implemented.

Should you require additional information or have questions/concerns, please contact Oxford County Public Works Department by phone at (519) 421-2203 or via e-mail at [dgoudreau@county.oxford.on.ca](mailto:dgoudreau@county.oxford.on.ca). Please share this letter with your customer service departments. Questions and concerns from the public can also be directed to the above number.

Yours truly,



 Robert Walton, P. Eng.  
Director of Public Works  
County of Oxford

cc: D. Goudreau, Manager, Water Services  
K. Whiteford, County of Oxford CAO  
P. Holbrough, County of Oxford Warden