IMPORTANT WATER QUALITY INFORMATION

September 2022

Dear Resident:

Recent water test results from St. Pauls Drinking Water System indicated a **Sodium** level of 24.2 - 26.4 mg/L (milligrams per litre). This level exceeds the drinking water requirements under Ontario Regulation 170/03 of 20 mg/L. **This is important for people who are on a sodium-reduced diet.**

What is Sodium?
Sodium is a common element in the natural environment and is often found in food and drinking water. In drinking water, sodium can occur naturally or be the result of road salt application, water treatment chemicals or ion-exchange water-softening units. Sodium levels may also vary in bottled water and carbonated water, depending on the brand.

Who Should Be Concerned?
Sodium concentrations in drinking water are not a concern for most people. Adults without apparent adverse health effects consume an amount in excess of 10 grams of sodium per day. In addition, the average intake of sodium from water is only a small fraction of that consumed in a normal diet. A maximum acceptable concentration for sodium in drinking water has not been specified as sodium is not a toxic element.

Elevated sodium concentrations in drinking water may have implications for the following groups:

- Individuals with poorly controlled or severe hypertension
- Individuals with congestive heart failure
- Individuals with other medical condition requiring a sodium restricted diet
- Infants

Those noted above may require a sodium-restricted diet in which case, intake from drinking water could become significant. Water with sodium levels above 20 mg/L should be noted as a possible risk for some people.

What to Do?
It is recommended that residents who are on a sodium-reduced or restricted diet consider an alternative source of drinking water (i.e. bottled water). This would also be recommended for water that is used for cooking as well as the concentration of sodium can increase when water is boiled.

Note, according to Ontario Regulation 170/03 sampling occurs every 5 years. Any visitors to your home should be advised of the elevated sodium levels in the water in the event they are included in the at-risk groups described above.

Softening water by sodium-ion exchange will increase the sodium level in drinking water and may contribute a significant percentage to the daily sodium intake for a consumer on a sodium-restricted diet. It is recommended that a separate unsoftened supply be available for drinking purposes. Consultation with a physician and the consumption of an alternate low-sodium, supply of water is recommended for this risk group.

A PUBLIC HEALTH NOTICE PROVIDED BY
HURON PERTH PUBLIC HEALTH
1-888-221-2133

Huron Perth Public Health
1–888–221–2133
hpph@hpph.ca
www.hpph.ca

Huron Office
77722B London Rd., RR #5
Clinton, Ontario
N0M 1L0

Perth Office
653 West Gore St.
Stratford, Ontario
N5A 1L4