

**June 2006**

## **Technical Update**

**For Municipal Residential Drinking Water Systems under O. Reg. 170/03**

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Following public consultation, on June 5, 2006, O. Reg. 170/03 was amended. These technical amendments are designed to safeguard the quality of Ontario's drinking water, while making the regulation more workable and affordable for owners and operators of municipal and non-municipal year-round residential drinking water systems and systems serving designated facilities. They also add clarity and flexibility to the testing and operational regimes set out in O. Reg. 170/03. For full details, please see:

[http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Regs/English/030170\\_e.htm](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/DBLaws/Regs/English/030170_e.htm)

### **Warning Notices**

This update provides details on when owners or operating authorities of systems must post warning notices of potential problems with the drinking water in the system, where the notices must be posted, and what they should look like.

### **System Category**

Owners or operating authorities of large municipal residential systems will be advised by the Medical Officer of Health as to what action they must take regarding public warnings, including when and how notices are to be given, so that these actions are carried out in conjunction with any Boil Water Advisories or Drinking Water Advisories that may need to be issued by the Medical Officer of Health through various media.

For small municipal residential systems, the requirements of O. Reg. 170 to post warning notices of potential problems are described in Schedule 19 of the regulation, but the local Medical Officer of Health should also be consulted and may direct additional steps.

### **Requirements to post notices for Small Municipal Residential Systems**

Warning notices at small municipal residential systems must be posted when:

- The owner or operating authority is required under Schedule 18 of O. Reg 170/03 to take all reasonable steps to ensure that all users of water from the system are notified to use an alternate source of drinking water or, if no alternate source is available, to bring water to a rapid rolling boil for at least one minute before use ( Use Notice A - see next page)
- The system is not presently in compliance with corrective action requirements of Schedule 18 of O. Reg. 170/03 ( Use Notice A)
- The system is not presently in compliance with microbiological sampling and testing requirements of Schedules 11 or 12 of O. Reg. 170/03 (Use Notice B)

Note that the posting of warning notices of potential problems does not exempt a system from compliance with any of the requirements of Schedules 11, 12 or 18 of O. Reg. 170/03, as applicable. Failure to comply with any of the requirements of O. Reg. 170/03, including those in Schedules 11, 12 or 18, constitutes a potential violation and the posting of a warning notice in

lieu of compliance will not in any way affect any decision that may be taken by a ministry investigator with respect to offences which have occurred in the past or may occur in the future.

Note also that warning notices may be posted by a Provincial Officer, by a Public Health Inspector, or by an agent of the interested authority (in a designated facility) should an owner/operator fail to do so.

### Posting locations

Warning notices must be posted in prominent locations where they are likely to come to the attention of users of the system.

If the system serves a designated facility, such as a day care, school, hospital, seniors' residence and other facilities, warning notices must be posted at every entrance to every building and every structure that is part of that designated facility. If the designated facility does not have any building or structure, warning notices must be posted at a location where they are likely to come to the attention of all persons who enter the facility.

### Warning notices available from the Ministry

Warning notices must either be provided by the Ministry of the Environment or approved by a ministry director. There are two warning notices available free-of-charge from the ministry for the purposes of posting warning notices of potential problems. The proper notice must be used according to the specific situation, as outlined above.

NOTICE A – Do not drink



NOTICE B – Not Tested



Warning notices are available by calling the Ministry of the Environment's Public Information Centre toll free at 1-800-565-4923 or (416) 325-4000.

### For more information contact:

Public Information Centre  
Ministry of the Environment  
135 St. Clair Avenue West  
Toronto, ON M4V 1P5  
Tel: 1-800-565-4923 or (416) 325-4000

[www.ene.gov.on.ca](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca)

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