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PROVINCE SAFEGUARDS DRINKING WATER IN HOMES AND SCHOOLS
Clearer, More Flexible Rules Will Help Ensure Clean Drinking Water For All Ontarians

TORONTO — The McGuinty government has taken another step to safeguard the province's water supply by improving the rules for drinking water systems, Environment Minister Laurel Broten announced today.

"All Ontario families want and need the cleanest drinking water possible to keep them healthy," said Broten. "By making the rules for operating municipal and private water systems clearer and more flexible, we are helping ensure safe drinking water for all Ontarians."

Ontario Regulation 170/03 sets water testing and treatment standards for municipal and private systems that provide water to year-round residences and those systems that serve facilities such as schools, day cares, health centres and social care facilities. Testing and operating requirements have been changed to be easier to follow, to provide more treatment options and reduce costs for smaller systems. The improvements are the result of extensive consultations over the last year with drinking water experts and with system owners and operators.

"The proposed risk-based changes will not compromise public health, but will make operations more practical," said Ontario Municipal Water Association Chair Rob Walton.

"The Ontario Water Works Association, along with OMWA, provided extensive constructive suggestions for improvements of Reg 170 and is pleased to see these revisions come into effect," added OWWA President Wayne Stiver.

This is just one example of how the McGuinty government is safeguarding drinking water to protect the health of Ontario families. Other initiatives include:

- Hiring 33 new full-time water inspectors, investigators and compliance staff
- Improving how drinking water systems operators across the province are trained
- Introducing the Clean Water Act to help prevent sources of drinking water from getting contaminated in the first place.

"We are committed to fully protecting Ontario's drinking water," said Broten. "This is a more workable, cost-effective approach for owners and operators that will maintain a high level of health protection."

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