

# Technical Update

**For licensed laboratories performing drinking-water testing and other stakeholders**

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## **NEW: Internet posting of the Ministry of Environment's "Protocol for Acceptance of Alternate Methods" (PAAM) – method equivalence document for drinking water testing.**

As required under the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002 (SDWA), the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) has documented test procedures for analytical testing in the O. Reg. 248/03 compendium document "Protocol of Accepted Drinking-Water Testing Methods". This document sets out testing methods that may be used for the conduct of tests of Ontario drinking water.

In addition, a laboratory must be accredited for the selected method by: the Standards Council of Canada (SCC); by an accreditation body that, in the Director's opinion, is equivalent to the SCC; or the laboratory must be authorized by the Director to conduct a particular test without accreditation, in accordance with the provisions of the act. In addition to these requirements, a laboratory must use validated methods for the parameters outlined in the "Protocol of Accepted Drinking-Water Testing Methods" document to conduct drinking-water tests.

A new protocol document, PAAM, was developed to provide flexibility in the use of analytical methods for chemical parameters while maintaining the quality standards needed for drinking-water analysis.

Under the PAAM method equivalence document, an organization or individual may use a modified version of the MOE designated reference methods without prior approval, provided that the laboratory demonstrates and documents that the modified method produces analytical data equal to or superior to these reference methods and the data validation instructions in this document are followed.

A modified method must be accredited and included in the laboratory licence prior to use for drinking-water sample analysis. The method should be identified as a modification of a reference method in the method description.

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The requirement for ISO/IEC 17025 method accreditation as a condition of a drinking-water testing licence, ensures that the laboratory is using a well documented and validated method and that the laboratory is competent to carry out the method as written.

The Ministry of the Environment maintains a list of licensed labs with contact information on its Website at [www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/water/sdwa/licensedlabs.htm](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/water/sdwa/licensedlabs.htm).

**For more information, contact:**

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