

June 26, 2024 - #BOH/2024/06/06

**Whereas**, private water testing is currently available through Public Health Ontario laboratories to residents who rely on drinking water from a private well or treated lake water to verify that their drinking water is potable; and

**Whereas**, the Honourable Minister Sylvia Jones has provided verbal reassurances on multiple occasions that private water testing will remain free to the residents of Ontario; and

**Whereas**, rural areas of Ontario comprise a higher volume of private water sources and will potentially be most impacted if cost-saving measures do not consider ruralism for private water testing services, including transportation of the sample by the resident to the point of drop off, and delivery from the point of drop off to the lab; and

**Whereas**, private water testing is already underutilized by residents and further changes to accessibility of water testing could further reduce utilization, putting residents at risk of consuming non-potable water and the potential for water-borne illness; and

**Whereas**, the Office of the Auditor General of Ontario report also identified quality improvement opportunities for coordination and communication of courier services used to transport water samples which may contribute to cost reductions without impacting Ontario residents, and also maintain the integrity of the sample being tested (reduce the number of samples rejected from the laboratory due to not arriving within the required timeframe).

**Therefore Be It Resolved**, That the Board of Health for the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit recommends that Public Health Ontario within its quality improvement plan, assesses the geographical areas from which private water samples are collected and, with the support of the Ministry of Health ensures that drop-off locations, courier services and laboratories are coordinated to meet the needs of those geographies and maintain the integrity of the sample being tested; and

**Furthermore Be It Resolved**, That the Board of Health provide correspondence of these resolutions to the Honourable Doug Ford (Premier), the Honourable Sylvia Jones (Ontario Minister of Health), Victor Fedeli, MPP (Nipissing), Graydon Smith, MPP (Parry Sound-Muskoka), John Vanthof, MPP (Timiskaming-Cochrane), Michael Sherar (President and CEO of Public Health Ontario), Ontario Boards of Health, the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA), and member municipalities.