



Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K9

MAY 29 2009

Mr. Hans Petersen
Safe Drinking Water Foundation
1-912 Idylwyld Drive North
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7L 0Z6

Dear Mr. Peterson:

Thank you for your correspondence of April 14, 2009, addressed to the Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of Health, concerning the recent federal engagement sessions on a legislative framework for drinking and waste water in First Nations communities.

Your taking the time to provide the Minister with a copy of your position paper, *Review of the Engagement Sessions for the Federal Action Plan on Safe Drinking Water for First Nations*, is appreciated, as well as your association's participation in the engagement sessions.

The Department is committed to working with First Nations to promote public health as it relates to drinking and waste water in First Nations communities south of 60°. Health Canada will continue to support Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) in the ongoing comprehensive consultation process to ensure that the proposed legislative framework reflects both the realities of First Nations communities and the protection of public health.

I note your concern regarding the parameters monitored under the *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality* (GCDWQ). As you are aware, Health Canada works with First Nations to monitor bacteriological, chemical and radiological parameters of drinking water distribution systems to help ensure safe drinking water. Our objectives include regular bacteriological monitoring depending on the size of the community and water distribution systems. Baseline chemical monitoring is performed on any new drinking water system, usually twice a year for at least two years, to determine trends in parameters. Routine chemical monitoring is performed on distribution systems with five or more connections at least once a year because chemical parameters may change over

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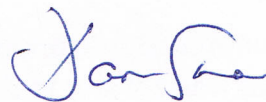
time. Radiological monitoring occurs every five years. It should also be noted that the parameters contained in the GCDWQ are comparable to other drinking water regulatory regimes, including the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the World Health Organization.

As you are probably aware, the engagement sessions were led by INAC. I have, therefore, taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of your correspondence to the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, for his consideration of the points you raise pertaining to his mandate.

Please be assured that Health Canada will continue to work with First Nations and federal and provincial partners in the consultation process toward a legislative framework to enhance the provision of safe drinking water on reserve.

Thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Danielle Shaw', written in a cursive style.

Danielle Shaw
Chief of Staff

c.c. Office of the Honourable Chuck Strahl, P.C., M.P.