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FUNDING FOR THE PROMOTION OF PRIVATE WELL WATER SAFETY

The Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee recommends the adoption of the recommendations contained in the following report, March 16, 2004, from the Commissioner of Health Services:

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee and Regional Council approve receipt of \$9,000 in one-time 100% funding from the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) to promote private well water safety.
2. Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee and Regional Council direct staff of the Health Services Department to utilize the funds in the manner outlined in this report.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee and Regional Council of MOHLTC 100% funding available to the Health Services Department for the Private Water System Project promotion. This report will outline how the Health Services Department will utilize the funds for public promotion and distribution of private water system educational materials.

3. BACKGROUND

A private water system is an unregulated well or water supply servicing a single household. Private water system owners are responsible for maintaining their own well or water supply, ensuring water quality and protecting their water source. Based on MOHLTC estimates, there are approximately 16,000 private wells registered in York Region.

The Health Services Department offers educational campaigns on drinking water safety for owners and users of private water systems to reduce the incidence of water-borne illness as required by *Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines, 1997* issued by the MOHLTC.

In 2003 the Health Services Department hosted three well water workshops in the Town of Georgina, King Township and the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville to inform and educate private well owners and users about well water quality and actions to protect their well water supply. Health Services staff also promoted well water safety at various community and regional events.

In 2003, the Health Services Department also responded to 1,113 inquiries from private well owners and retrieved water quality results from 7,618 samples taken by private well owners and users for future analysis.

The public was also provided one-on-one consultations upon request which included advice on water sampling, well maintenance and construction, protection of drinking water supplies, well disinfection, and emergency and well water treatment.

4. ANALYSIS AND OPTIONS

In December 2003, the Public Health Branch of the MOHLTC announced that one-time 100% funding would be available to health units to promote private well water safety in the community.

The Health Services Department planned on providing three workshops for owners and users of private water systems this year.

In February 2004, the Health Services Department was advised that the MOHLTC would provide one-time funding of \$9,000 to promote well water safety in The Regional Municipality of York. The amount was based on the number of wells the Ministry of the Environment has identified in the Region.

Upon the approval and receipt of these funds, the Health Services Department will increase the number of workshops planned for owners and users of private water systems from three to six, produce advertising and promotional literature on private water system safety, and distribute materials at community events such as the York Children's Water Festival and Earth Week.

4.1 Relationship to Vision 2026

The Private Water Systems Project supports the goals of an Enhanced Environment, Heritage and Culture and Responding to the Needs of Our Residents as outlined in York Region's Vision 2026 document.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The MOHLTC has allocated one-time 100% funding of \$9,000 for promotion of well water safety.

The Health Services Department will use the one-time funding in the manner set out in Table 1. Any staff related costs will be accommodated in the 2004 Public Health Business Plan and Budget.

Table 1
2004 Budget for Promotion of Well Water Quality

Type of Expenditure	Estimated Cost
Advertising Workshops and Community Events	\$3,000
Promotional Items (magnets and fact cards)	2,500
Display	2,000
Securing Venues	1,000
Refreshments	300
Handling Costs	200
Total Gross Expenditures	\$9,000
100% Funding from MOHLTC	9,000
Net Cost to Taypayer	\$ 0

6. LOCAL MUNICIPAL IMPACT

The Health Services Department will consult with individual municipalities to promote the delivery of well water resource kits and identify appropriate community events for Health Services participation. Local municipalities will benefit from an increased awareness, by their rural residents, of the importance of maintaining their private water system water supply and protecting the water source for themselves and their neighbours.

7. CONCLUSION

Promotion of private well water safety will assist owners and users of private water systems to protect, maintain and remediate their wells, and ensure that users are provided a safe water supply.

It is recommended that Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee and Regional Council approve the receipt of MOHLTC one-time 100% funding to promote private water system safety in the community and for the Private Water System Project.

The Senior Management Group has reviewed this report.