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March 13, 2006

Mr. Joe La Marca, B.A.Sc.(E.H.), C.P.H.I.©
Director
Health Protection Division
Health Services Department
The Regional Municipality of York
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket ON L3Y 6Z1

Dear Mr. La Marca:

Re: Letter of February 3, 2006 with regard to inventory of drinking-water systems

During the negotiations of the transfer of oversight for small drinking water systems from the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) the MOE insisted on limiting the negotiations only to those systems for which the MOE had responsibility. Their position, although somewhat limiting, was not unreasonable given that other systems not covered by the inventory are already subject to regular inspections mandate under the HPPA. Therefore we are aware that some drinking water systems that could and probably should be included in the new small water systems program in the immediate future will not be included when the program is rolled out in January 2007. However, these systems e.g. food premises under the general provisions of the HPPA are required to provide potable water which minimizes the risk to the consumer.

I feel comfortable that there are several significant cushions built into the program that will make it possible for the public health system province-wide to accommodate any systems that were not captured by the existing inventory. The first is the difference between the inventory that was used to calculate the resource needs and the actual number of systems which is significantly lower. Second is the number of systems that (subject to MOH/PHI approval) can elect to post, and therefore, will require little by way of ongoing time consuming visits. Third is that we included in our submission a provision for our program area to report back in 2009 upon completion of the initial risk assessment and if necessary flag any resource issues.

Overall, I feel confident that the resources that were identified for the start-up (2007, 2008 and part of 2009) and out years are more than adequate to cover the costs of the new activities that are associated with the oversight of small drinking water systems.

I hope to be able to discuss these and other aspects of this new program at a special meeting I am attempting to arrange to coincide with the spring ASPHIO meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Fred W. Ruf', with a stylized, cursive script.

Fred W. Ruf, M.E.S., C.P.H.I. (C)
A/Head, Environmental Health and Toxicology,
Food Safety and Safe Water Unit

P06-00385