

Minister of Health



Ministre de la Santé

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K9

DEC 03 2012

His Worship Mike Frazier
Committee Chair
North Central Local Government Association
206-155 George Street
Prince George, British Columbia V2L 1P8

Dear Mr. Mayor:

The Honourable Keith Ashfield, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and Minister for the Atlantic Gateway, has forwarded to me a copy of your correspondence of July 26, 2012, concerning a resolution passed by the North Central Local Government Association about funding for water infrastructure projects.

In Canada, the responsibility for drinking water quality falls under the authority of the provincial and territorial governments. This includes the development and implementation of regulations, as well as decisions regarding drinking water treatment and distribution, including treatment additives. Health Canada works with the provinces and territories through the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Committee on Drinking Water (CDW) to develop the *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*.

The Guidelines are not regulations. Rather, they are used by each province and territory as a basis to establish their own requirements for drinking water quality. The Guidelines and their guideline technical documents are developed and approved in a national context and reflect the consensus decisions made by the CDW as a whole. In the case of turbidity, the guideline technical document provides the flexibility for jurisdictions to exempt treatment plants from filtration by including a number of considerations based on a multi-barrier approach to ensure the safety of drinking water.

The Department recognizes the challenges faced by small communities and those on individual wells for ensuring safe drinking water. Health Canada has worked with the provinces and territories to develop strategies and tools that will help address some of the gaps in this area. However, the Department does not play any role in funding programs for drinking water systems.

I appreciate having had your concerns brought to my attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Leona Aglukkaq".

Leona Aglukkaq

Canada