

**Municipality of Chatham-Kent**  
**Chatham-Kent Public Utilities Commission**  
**Water/Wastewater Services**  
**Information Report**

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Darren Galbraith, C.E.T.  
General Manager  
**Date:** December 9, 2024  
**Subject:** Bottled Water Distribution Policy for Water Advisories

---

This report is for the information of Council.

**Background**

On September 13, 2023, due to a water pressure drop caused by a fire at the Wheatley Water Treatment Plant, a Boil Water Advisory was issued for the Wheatley and Tilbury municipal drinking water system. CK Public Health Unit and Windsor-Essex Public Health Unit issued the Boil Water Advisories. On September 25, 2023, Council approved a motion that municipal staff purchase and hand out bottled water for all residents in the Wheatley and Tilbury municipal drinking water system starting on September 28, 2023. Bottled water was distributed in the communities of Wheatley and Tilbury until October 4, 2023 when the Advisory was lifted.

At the September 25, 2023, Council meeting, a Motion of Council was moved by Councillor Anderson:

“That administration formulate a Bottled Water Policy to be utilized in all future boil water advisories, floods, tornados or other emergencies in Chatham-Kent. Taking into consideration:

1. Vulnerable populations;
2. Cost associated with supplying water to all and where the dollars to fund should come from; and
3. How any days a boil water advisory has been in affect prior to supplying bottled water to residents.”

**Comments**

CK PUC has a procedure for both bulk and bottled water distribution during a Do Not Drink Advisory. The procedure is clear that bottled or bulk water will be distributed during a Do Not Drink Advisory only. In the procedure, it states that “Bottled or Bulk Water will not be supplied to consumers by the CK PUC in the event of a Boil Water Advisory.”

The Chatham-Kent Public Utilities Commission has had a documented Boil Water Policy/Procedure for Boil Water Advisories included in the Quality Management System (QMS) since 2009. Prior to 2009, occurrences of Boil Water Advisories were dealt with on a case-by-case basis. The title of the procedure is “Boil Water Advisory Response, Reporting & Corrective Actions – Procedure”.

Upon review of the Boil Water Advisory procedure, it was determined the language was not clear that CK PUC will not supply bottled water in the event of a boil water advisory. Therefore, on June 1, 2024, the procedure was amended to clearly state that bottled water will not be supplied during a Boil Water Advisory to match the language in the Do Not Drink Advisory policy.

Other municipalities and water utilities in Ontario were contacted and indicated that they have no policies in place and that they do not distribute bottled water in a “Boil Water Advisory”. Our neighbouring municipalities of Lakeshore and Leamington were also canvassed and neither have a policy in place and they do not distribute bottled water in a “Boil Water Advisory” scenario.

CK PUC Administration has discussed the policies and procedures for bottled water distribution and have agreed that they should remain the same and should be referred to for future Boil Water Advisories and Do Not Drink Advisories, if they occur. The policies in place are clear and documented if a future boil water advisory arises.

**Council Term Priorities**

This report supports the following Council Term Priorities:

			
<p><b>Deliver Excellent Service</b></p>	<p><b>Promote Safety &amp; Well-Being</b></p>	<p><b>Grow Our Community</b></p>	<p><b>Ensure Environmental Sustainability</b></p>
	<p>3c</p>		

### **Consultation**

Consultation occurred with Councilor Anderson regarding having a clear policy the public can be referred to regarding the distribution of bottled water for water advisories. The policies in place are clear and documented if a future boil water advisory arises.

The policy/procedure was brought to the Wheatley Water Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) – Planning Committee earlier this year with no objections.

CK PUC Administration canvassed other water utilities/municipalities regarding their boil water advisory procedures and found that CK PUC has similar procedures. Administration discussed the policies and agreed there is no further need to amend the policies.

### **Communication**

Communication is proposed to be through the inclusion of this report on the Council agenda and minutes.

### **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ)**

This report does not have implications related to diversity, equity, inclusion or justice.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications resulting from the report.

Prepared by: Rob Bernardi, P. Eng. Director, Engineering & Compliance

Reviewed by: Darren Galbraith, C.E.T, General Manager

Consulted and confirmed the content of the consultation section of the report by:

Lauren Anderson, Councillor  
General Manager, CK PUC  
Manager, Compliance & Quality Standards, CK PUC

Attachment: none