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To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Important Information on Water Chemistry Changes for Commercial and Industrial Users

Ontario legislation requires municipal water supply authorities to test for the presence of lead in drinking water at customer taps, and to put into effect corrosion control measures in the event that lead levels are higher than the regulatory limit (O.Reg. 170/03, Schedule 15.1, of the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002; MOE, 2007).

Testing performed by the PUC has shown that while lead is not present as a contaminant in drinking water when it is distributed from Sault Ste. Marie water treatment facilities to our customers, lead may enter the water after coming into prolonged contact with a building's pipes and plumbing fixtures, particularly in older properties (e.g. built prior to the mid-1950s).

In compliance with the legislation, PUC is undertaking the addition of two new treatment processes required to reduce the potential for lead uptake from lead bearing pipes and fixtures. These new processes include the addition of soda ash and carbon dioxide to adjust pH and the addition of blended phosphates to control internal corrosion of pipes and fixtures.

The pH of drinking water in Sault Ste. Marie currently ranges from approximately pH 7.0 - 8.6. With the addition of the new treatment processes, we expect the pH range of the water will be stabilized to pH 7.6 – 7.8. Soda ash (i.e. sodium carbonate - Na_2CO_3) will be added at the water treatment plant and carbon dioxide will be added at the east end wells. As a result of adding soda ash, a slight increase in sodium content of about 2.2 mg/L is expected in treated water produced at the water treatment plant. Also, the treated water from both the treatment plant and the wells will now contain phosphates at a concentration of 1 – 2 mg/L.

We have attached two informational brochures which provide an overview of the lead issue and include website links and phone numbers for additional information.

Sincerely,

Giordan Zin
Supervisor, Communications
PUC Services Inc.

Enclosures:

“Water Facts: Lead in Tap Water & PUC Action to Control It”

“What You Need To Know About Drinking Water and Lead in Sault Ste. Marie”