

Hon. John Gerretsen, Minister
Municipal Affairs and Housing
777 Bay Street, 17th Floor
Toronto, ON
M5G 2E5

21/07/04

Honourable Minister,

RE: Resolutions from alPHa Annual Conference, 2004

On behalf of member Medical Officers of Health, Boards of Health, and Affiliate organizations of the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa), I am writing to introduce a resolution endorsed this past June by our membership for consideration, information and anticipated action by your government. A copy is included for your convenience.

No. A04-7 Minimum Separation Distances from Sewage Systems to Wells and Surface Waters

Safe, accessible and clean drinking water is a requirement for good health. From the source, through treatment and distribution, to the tap of the consumer, drinking water must be protected from contamination. Monitoring, verification and contingency plans must be in place to ensure that measures to protect drinking water are working, and that problems can be quickly identified and reversed. Strong legislation is essential to these protective measures. This includes identifying any opportunity to bring older systems into compliance, such as when repairs or replacements are conducted.

Thank you for your attention to these important issues. We look forward to a reply at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Susan Lee
Interim Executive Director

encl.

2004 alPHa RESOLUTION NO. A04-7

TITLE: Minimum Separation Distances from Sewage Systems to Wells and Surface Waters

SPONSOR: Board of Health for the Peterborough County-City Health Unit

WHEREAS effluent from private sewage systems may contain many human pathogens; and,

WHEREAS the risk of well contamination increases with proximity to sewage systems; and,

WHEREAS the risk of surface water contamination increases with proximity to sewage systems; and,

WHEREAS the Honourable Dennis O'Connor, in his Report of the Walkerton Inquiry, identified that for rural residents who drink untreated groundwater from wells, source protection is the only protection available; and,

WHEREAS current regulations under the Building Code Act do not establish a minimum separation between sewage systems and wells when repairing or replacing a sewage system;

WHEREAS these current regulations do not clearly define the terms "repair" and "replacement" of sewage systems;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (alPHa) petition the Minister of Municipal Affairs to immediately amend the regulations governing the repair and replacement of sewage systems to include a clear definition of the "repair" and "replacement" of sewage systems and to require that the minimum separation to wells and surface water not be less than that required for newly constructed sewage systems.

Action from Conference: **Moved:** **P. Heath (Peterborough)**
Seconded: **M. Pearson (Peterborough)** **Carried**