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To: All Councillors and Mayor

From: Lou Di Gironimo, General Manager Toronto Water

CC: Richard Butts, Deputy City Manager

Date: January 28, 2009

Subject: **Changes to the Non-Regulated (on-demand) Lead Testing Program**

Residents living in single-family homes built prior to the mid-1950s may have lead pipes connecting their property to the City's water supply system. Homes built after this time are not connected with lead pipes. This information is primarily for Councillors whose wards have homes built prior to the mid-1950s.

Residents in homes with lead pipes and who are concerned about lead in their water can request a free test from Toronto Water. These residents should practice flushing (see below) in the interim.

To decrease significant waiting times encountered by residents requesting a free lead test, the Toronto Water Laboratory has consulted with Toronto Public Health and implemented the following changes to the lead testing program:

- Testing kits are now available at six Toronto Public Health offices (see below) throughout the City of Toronto
- Residents must pick-up a testing kit from an appropriate Toronto Public Health office, collect their water sample and return the sample to the Toronto Public Health office
- Toronto Water Lab staff will retrieve completed kits from the Public Health offices, analyze the samples and contact the residents with their results
- The kits are available at front reception, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday
- **Residents should contact the Toronto Water Laboratory at 416-392-2894 to pre-register for the test BEFORE picking up a test kit**
- Alternatively, residents can email waterqualityline@toronto.ca with their full name, mailing address and phone number – Lab staff will respond with confirmation the request has been registered and provide information about the pick-up locations

Note: Requests for testing kits received before January 12, 2009 will still be offered the previous service (drop-off to/pick-up from the resident's home by Toronto Water Lab staff) and therefore may be subject to significant wait times. Residents who have contacted Toronto Water before January 12, 2009 can opt to use the Toronto Public Health locations to pick-up testing kits/drop-off samples themselves and expedite the process.

Residents should only use cold, flushed water for drinking and cooking. They should never use hot water from the tap for consumption as heated water may contain higher lead levels. Boiling water does not remove lead.

Flushing the taps

Water can be flushed by running the cold tap until the water is cold, and then continue letting it run for at least a minute before drinking, especially if it has been standing in the pipes for a few hours. Residents can conserve by storing a pitcher of water in the refrigerator rather than flushing the taps each time drinking water is needed. Other activities such as showering, flushing toilets and washing dishes can minimize the need to flush taps.

For residents with lead pipes who have an infant in the home, particularly infants fed with formula made with tap water; have a child under the age of six in the home; or are pregnant, Toronto Public Health recommends taking the added precaution of using a filter certified by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF) to remove lead. The NSF-53 mark should be visible on the product label. The NSF can be contacted at 1-877-867-3435 or www.nsf.org.

For more information about lead exposure and potential health risks, residents can contact Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600 or www.toronto.ca/health/lead.

Lead test kit pick-up/drop-off locations

As of January 12, 2009

West Region

Etobicoke Civic Centre, 4th floor
399 The West Mall, at Burnhamthorpe Road

North Region

North York Civic Centre, 2nd floor
5100 Yonge Street, north of Sheppard Avenue

East Region

1530 Markham Road, 5th floor
At Milner Avenue, north of Hwy. 401

South Region

- 2340 Dundas Street West, main floor
Near Dundas West subway station;
area known as The Crossways
- 44 Victoria Street, 18th Floor
Adelaide Street, north of King Street
- East York Civic Centre, main floor
850 Coxwell Avenue, at Mortimer Avenue