
**GROUND WATER QUALITY ISSUES IN THE
GRANDORA / DUNFERMLINE / VANSCOY AREA**

NEWS CONFERENCE

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VICE-PRESIDENT, OPERATIONS
SASKATCHEWAN WATERSHED AUTHORITY**

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NOVEMBER 17, 2004
11:00 A.M.**

- Saskatchewan Watershed Authority has a mandate to protect source water quality and quantity in Saskatchewan. As part of this mandate, we have the responsibility to approve all uses and allocation of ground and surface water for non-domestic purposes.
- The Authority recently suspended our approval to TransGas on a project to use ground water to flush out underground caverns to create storage for natural gas. This suspension was done with the full cooperation and assistance of TransGas. Additional monitoring wells are being installed and the controlled shut down will occur within the next few weeks.
- This action was taken directly in response to public concerns about the impacts the project may have been having on domestic water supplies in the area. At the same time, some individuals expressed concern about possible effects on water quality.
- As part of our response to these concerns, we have undertaken additional water quality and quantity monitoring.
- The public expressed a concern. We listened. We responded promptly.
- Now we are reporting back to the public on what we have found to date. We have identified that there is a water quality issue in the area.
- We have stated previously that we do not believe there is any scientific evidence linking the water quality issues to the TransGas project. We still believe that this is the case.
- Seventeen wells in the Vanscoy / Grandora area were sampled by Authority staff between November 8 and 10, 2004. These 17 wells were deemed to be at the highest risk, based on previous data.

- These wells were tested for a broad range of constituents including nitrate, bacteria, major ions, and trace metals.
- All tested wells are currently being used as a domestic water supply.
- As of 5:00 pm yesterday, we had results from 15 wells.
 - Eleven of fifteen wells exceeded in one or more parameter.
 - Five locations exceeded the standard for nitrate.
 - Five exceeded the standard for uranium.
 - Five exceeded the standard for selenium.
 - Five exceeded the standard for coliform.
 - One exceeded the standard for arsenic.
- Five of these wells have either distillation or reverse osmosis as a point of use treatment. In four cases, nitrate, uranium and arsenic concentrations were reduced to acceptable levels.
- *The Authority has contacted individual well owners where test results have exceeded Drinking Water Quality Guidelines. We have informed them of their test results. We are advising them not to drink the water and to contact Public Health for advice on treatment options.*
- There are a number of home water treatment options to address these types of concentrations, including distillation and reverse osmosis.
- All analytical results have been forwarded to Public Health.
- The Authority is investigating possible causes of the exceedances. This will involve testing of more wells.
- Ground water often has naturally occurring contaminants and all well owners should test their water supplies regularly to determine water quality. The exceedances we have identified here are not uncommon in other Saskatchewan locations.