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**2017: SB15**

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Superintendents of Business  
Superintendents of Facilities

**FROM:** Colleen Hogan  
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Drinking Water Programs Branch  
Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change

**DATE:** **June 9, 2017**

**SUBJECT:** **Release of Expanded Drinking Water Data on Open  
Data Catalogue**

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In the next few weeks, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) plans to release data sets on drinking water in schools, including lead exceedance results. This memorandum provides information about the upcoming release and steps that school boards should consider in preparation for this data release.

**Expanding Public Drinking Water Data**

In support of Ontario's commitment to Open Government, MOECC will be expanding the drinking water data currently available on the [Open Data Catalogue](#) under [Drinking Water Quality and Enforcement](#) to include more detailed information on facilities, such as schools and child care centres.

Unlike the MOECC's current public drinking water reports, the data to be released through the Open Data Catalogue will contain information, such as the names of all regulated drinking water systems subject to O. Reg. 170/03 (Drinking Water Systems) and facilities subject to O. Reg. 243/07 (Schools, Private Schools and Child Care Centres), in addition to detailed test results, including test results for lead.

The upcoming data release covers the period from April 1, 2016, to December 31, 2016. Moving forward, the data will be updated quarterly with annual aggregate data released after each year. We encourage you to monitor the Open Data Catalogue for ongoing updates.

The data sets which will be of particular interest to school boards are:

- **Test Result Data:** includes drinking water test results for microbiological, organic and inorganic chemicals, as well as lead.
- **Adverse Water Quality Incident:** includes incident reports from drinking water systems and facilities where a water test result has exceeded the Ontario Drinking Water Quality Standards or an operational issue is identified and reported as potentially affecting the water quality of the system or facility.
- **Inspections:** includes a list of registered schools and child care centres which were inspected by MOECC staff in order to assess compliance with O. Reg. 243/07 and O. Reg. 170/03, and help reduce the risk of children being exposed to lead in drinking water. The ministry uses a risk-based approach to determine which schools and child care centres should be inspected.

### **Next Steps – Data Review and Communications Planning**

To prepare for this release, the MOECC will be sharing their drinking water test result data with each school board. The government is not planning a public announcement about this release. However, we want your board to be prepared for any questions that you might receive related to this release.

In preparation, the Ministry of Education is recommending that school boards prepare communication materials regarding the board's drinking water procedures. While we encourage school boards to share this memorandum and upcoming pre-release data with the operators of any child care centres located in schools, school boards are asked not to share this data publicly prior to the actual release.

### **If requested, school boards should be able to:**

- Communicate to the public any test results, corrective actions and regular maintenance procedures regarding drinking water within the school or child care center;
- Explain the board's process for notifying parents and guardians when a drinking water test result from a school indicates a lead exceedance;
- Provide additional (historical) drinking water data, if requested by the public; and,
- Outline any available mitigation strategies considered by the board.

Should you have questions about the release of the expanded data sets outlined above, please contact the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change Drinking Water Registration Help Desk's toll-free line at 866-793-2588 or email: [drinking.water@ontario.ca](mailto:drinking.water@ontario.ca).

*Original signed by:*

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cc. Directors of Education