



**PORT COLBORNE**

**Subject: 2023 Drinking Water Operational Plan**

**To: Council**

**From: Public Works Department**

Report Number: 2023-44

Meeting Date: March 14, 2023

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**Recommendation:**

That Public Works Department Report 2023-44 be received; and

That Council endorse the Port Colborne Water Distribution System Quality Management System Operational Plan attached as Appendix A to Public Works Department Work 2023-44.

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**Purpose:**

In accordance with the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002*, which outlines the requirement for Council's endorsement of the Drinking Water Quality Management System (DWQMS), as documented in the Operational Plan, is required to fulfill the requirements of the Drinking Water Quality Management Standard with the new term of Council.

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**Background:**

The Municipal Drinking Water Licensing Program implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) requires all municipal drinking water systems to be operated by accredited Operating Authorities. As part of this accreditation, Operational Plans are required to be endorsed by water system owner representatives.

The Operational Plan must satisfy the requirements of the MECP's Drinking Water Quality Management Standard which requires that the owner of a drinking water system develop a Quality Management System (QMS) that is relevant and appropriate for the system. A QMS consists of a set of policies, procedures and objectives that direct and control an organization with respect to quality.

Re-endorsement of the Operational Plan is required following any significant changes to the Operational Plan or within one year following an election of Council. The City's Operational Plan was last endorsed by Council on October 25, 2021, to reflect updates to staffing and organizational changes.

The Statutory Standard of Care provisions of the *Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002* make individuals with oversight responsibilities for municipal drinking water systems legally responsible for decisions made regarding the system. The intent of this Standard of Care is to ensure that owner representatives and various levels of decision makers of the municipal drinking water systems are acting diligently and making informed decisions when required. These decisions can impact the quality and safety of the municipal drinking water provided to all customers.

Awareness of drinking water legislation and regulations, Port Colborne's Operational Plan and annual reporting are some of the ways members of Council can provide diligent oversight under the Standard of Care requirements.

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## **Discussion:**

The City's DWQMS is documented in the Operational Plan, which reflects a fully implemented DWQMS with a focus on continual improvement and is made available to the Public upon request.

The Operational Plan contains 21 elements and emphasizes the importance of:

- A proactive and preventative approach to management strategies that identify and manage risks to public health,
- Establishing and documenting management procedures,
- Clearly identifying roles and responsibilities, and
- Continual improvement of the management system.

Port Colborne's Operational Plan (appendix A) details how the City's operating authority meets the requirements of each element. The Operational Plan is reviewed after organizational and operational changes, during internal and external audits and during the annual Management Review. Any additional staffing changes in the Public Works Department will be incorporated into the Plan. If changes are beyond what is considered administrative, the Operational Plan will be brought to Council for endorsement again.

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## **Internal Consultations:**

There were no consultations with other departments for the purpose of this report.

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## **Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications.

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## **Public Engagement:**

There was no public notification or engagement initiatives as part of this report. The Operational Plan is posted on the City's website and hardcopies available upon request.

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## **Strategic Plan Alignment:**

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillar of the strategic plan:

- Service and Simplicity - Quality and Innovative Delivery of Customer Services
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## **Conclusion:**

With the City's ongoing commitment to the DWQMS and continual improvement initiatives, the Operating Authority can continue to provide a safe, reliable, and sustainable supply of municipal drinking water for its residents and businesses. Endorsement of the DWQMS Operational Plan demonstrates Council's commitment, as the Owner of the drinking water system, to the provision of safe drinking water and the principles of quality management and continual improvement.

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## **Appendices:**

- a. Water Distribution System Quality Management System Operational Plan

Respectfully submitted,

Cassandra Banting  
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## **Report Approval:**

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.