City of Iqaluit
1085 Mivvik Street
P.O. Box 460
Iqaluit, Nunavut
X0A 0H0

News Release

Drinking Water Update

October 15, 2021 – Iqaluit, Nunavut

The City of Iqaluit has made progress on its investigation of odors found in the drinking water.

A high concentration of odor was discovered in one of the in-ground water tanks at the Water Treatment Plant. The results of water quality testing show high concentrations of various fuel contaminants in the sample collected from that tank. The City has been able to isolate the tank and bypass this tank. The contaminated water is being pumped out into trucks and transferred to holding tanks to prepare for treatment and remediation. Once the affected tank at the Water Treatment Plant is emptied, an inspection on the tank will be conducted to determine how contaminates entered the tank. Additional remedial work will be determined based on the findings of the inspection. It should be noted that water quality testing of the treated reservoir, located downstream from the Water Treatment Plant, showed levels well within health limits.

To remove any potential contamination from the plant and distribution system, the City started flushing the water distribution system yesterday. We expect to continue flushing the system for an additional 48 hours. Once the flushing is complete, residents will receive instructions, via Public Service Announcement (PSA), to flush their home pipes by running water for 20 minutes. Testing and monitoring will continue over several months.

The City and its water-engineering consultant's suspect that contaminants outside of the plant, that are located in the soil or ground water, have entered the tank from the exterior. The City is undertaking an environmental site assessment phase II which includes examining historical information of the area, drilling boreholes, digging test pits to sample the soil and ground water to test for contaminants. Next steps will be determined based on the findings of the environmental assessment.

Until further notice, the do not consume advisory for the City remains in place.

Until further notice:

- Do not to consume tap water for drinking or cooking. This includes boiled water, filtered water through commercially sold filters such as Brita filters and filtered water through reverse osmosis systems.
- Do not use tap water to mix infant formula.

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Tap water may still be used for the following purposes:

- Laundry.
- Cleaning.
- Baths and showers are allowed (avoid swallowing water).
- Pregnant women, newborns and infants can bathe or be bathed using tap water.
- Washing dishes.

The City of Iqaluit will provide an additional update as information becomes available.

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