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News Release

For immediate release
March 25, 2003

DRINKING WATER TESTING LABS TO BE LICENSED

TORONTO — The Ontario government is proposing to make it mandatory that all laboratories that test drinking water be licensed, Environment Minister Chris Stockwell announced today.

"This is a first for Ontario and a first for Canada," Stockwell said. "Licensing of laboratories will ensure that there are strict standards in place for those who test Ontario's drinking water. In addition, laboratories will be subject to random visits by Ministry inspectors for the first time in Ontario's history."

The proposed Drinking Water Testing Services Regulation, along with Part VII of the Safe Drinking Water Act 2002, will require mandatory licensing (with a five-year renewal) of all private, municipal and provincial laboratories that test drinking water. It proposes conditions for subcontracting, handling and labeling of samples, and protocols for accepting drinking water samples. It is proposed that the requirement for licensing will take effect October 1, 2003. The proposed regulation will only allow drinking water testing to be conducted at out-of-province labs that meet the equivalent requirements.

Licensing and inspection of laboratories were recommended by Commissioner O'Connor in his Walkerton inquiry report and mandated by the recently enacted *Safe Drinking Water Act*.

The [draft regulation is available for public comment](#) until April 25. To obtain a copy, visit the Ministry of the Environment's Web site at www.ene.gov.on.ca. Click on "EBR", then "Environmental Registry", or call the Ministry's Public Information Centre at (416) 325-4000 or 1-800-565-4923.

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