



BACKGROUNDER / FICHE DOCUMENTAIRE

For immediate release:
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Water-Use Restrictions

Ottawa - The Environmental Services Department was executing an infrastructure renewal plan for the 1220 mm (48-inch) Woodroffe Avenue transmission main, which supplies drinking water to Barrhaven, Riverside South and Manotick. The plan originally called for the work to be done after system redundancy upgrades implemented in 2011 ensured that the work could be completed without service impacts to residents.

However, a break in the transmission main occurred in January. As a result, an emergency condition assessment was undertaken and confirmed in February that not only did the transmission main south of Hunt Club Road further deteriorate, but that similar deterioration also occurred in sections north of Hunt Club.

Since the January break, the 1220 mm (48-inch) transmission main has been out-of-service and the above noted areas are served by a much smaller 400 mm (16-inch) diameter water main and a temporary pumping station.

Working on an urgent basis, the renewal work on the 1220 mm (48-inch) transmission main is scheduled to commence in early May and be complete by mid-August. During construction, the affected areas will continue to be served by the 400 mm (16-inch) transmission main.

This back up pipe can only deliver 10 per cent of the volume of the transmission main. In other words, the City's ability to supply water to these areas is reduced by 90 per cent. Detailed modeling of past consumption shows this smaller pipe does not provide sufficient capacity to meet normal increased demand during the late spring and summer period.

Recognizing this, and after an exhaustive search of all reasonable alternatives to supply more water to this area proved unsuccessful, the City has no choice but to implement an immediate ban on all outdoor water use until the renewal work is completed in mid-August. This includes lawn and garden watering, car washing, pool filling and top ups, building or grounds cleaning, and any other outdoor uses.

Should water use exceed our ability to supply it, very serious impacts including potential contamination of the water supply in the affected areas, depressurization of the system, loss of supply, and difficulties in supplying fire protection could result. Addressing these issues would require a boil water advisory for up to four weeks, severe water-use restrictions including indoor use restrictions, bottled water being supplied to 60,000 to 80,000 customers for an extended period.

Communication, Voluntary Compliance Measures and Enforcement,

The City is launching a public information campaign to alert residents in the area to the importance of following the ban. This campaign will include advertising, direct mailouts, regular updates with councillors, and ongoing communication with local businesses.

The City has developed a number of Voluntary Compliance Measures, including:

- A Top It Up program to fill and replenish pools and hot tubs,
- Support for Garden Centres,
- Rain Barrel subsidy, and,
- A Flusher Hydrant program.

However, due to the importance of avoiding the situation outlined above, the mandatory ban on all outdoor water uses will be enforced with warnings and fines.

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In summary, we understand the negative impact this will have on many residents and the communities affected, and are asking residents to bear with us. If there was a reasonable alternative, we wouldn't be doing this.

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For more information:

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Public inquiries

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