

Public Works Department

(519) 449-2451 or 1-888-250-2295

(519) 449-3382 (FAX) Public Works Dept.

e-mail: publicworks@brant.ca

Web Site <http://www.brant.ca>



County Administrative Building

26 Park Avenue

Burford ON

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 160

Burford, Ontario N0E 1A0

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TO: All Consumers of Water from the Cainsville-King George Road Distribution System – Cainsville DS

RE: RESULTS OF SODIUM TESTING

As part of the County's ongoing municipal water quality assurance program the concentration of sodium is tested.

The levels of sodium in the water are of interest because at higher levels it can impart a salty taste to the water and persons on sodium reduced diets need to know the sodium levels in the drinking water so that they can monitor their sodium intake. Specifically, the Technical Support Document for Ontario Drinking Water – Standards, Objectives and Guidelines, Ministry of the Environment indicates the following regarding sodium:

"Sodium (inorganic)

The aesthetic objective for sodium in drinking water is 200 mg/L at which it can be detected by a salty taste. Sodium is not toxic. Consumption of sodium in excess of 10 grams per day by normal adults does not result in any apparent adverse health effects. In addition, the average intake of sodium from water is only a small fraction of that consumed in a normal diet. A maximum acceptable concentration for sodium in drinking water has, therefore, not been specified. Persons suffering from hypertension or congestive heart disease may require a sodium restricted diet, in which case, the intake of sodium from drinking water could become significant. It is therefore recommended that the measurement of sodium levels be included in routine monitoring programs of water supplies. The local Medical Officer of Health should be notified when the sodium concentration exceeds 20 mg/L, so that this information may be passed on to local physicians.

Softening using a domestic water softener increases the sodium level in drinking water and may contribute a significant percentage to the daily sodium intake for a consumer on a sodium restricted diet. It is recommended that a separate unsoftened supply be retained for cooking and drinking purposes."

As the main source of sodium in the drinking water is believed to be road salt, the concentrations of sodium varies seasonally. The results reported of most recent testing are 49.9 mg/l in November 2010 and 76 mg/l in January 2011.

Those who are hypertensive or are on a sodium-reduced diet should consult with their physician about this matter.

There should be no concern for healthy individuals. For perspective, consider that if the concentration in the drinking water is 76 mg/l you would have to drink 131 litres of water to consume 10 grams of sodium in one day.

According to the above noted protocol, the County has notified the Medical Officer of Health who in turn requested that this notice be provided annually to all consumers of water from the Cainsville Distribution System so that those who do not go to local physicians are advised of the matter.

For further information regarding the County of Brant's municipal water refer to the County of Brant's web site at www.brant.ca or call the Public Works Water Division at 519-449-2451.

For health related information please call the Brant County Health Unit at 519-753-4937.

Yours very truly,

Alex Davidson, P.Eng, AMCT
Water Division Manager