TORONTO

REFERRAL OF MEMBER MOTION BY CITY COUNCIL

Establishment of a Toronto Water "Lead Content Mitigation Subsidy Program"

Date:	January 29, 2009
To:	Public Works and Infrastructure Committee
From:	City Council
Wards:	All

City Council Decision

City Council on January 27 and 28, 2009, referred Motion MM30.5 to the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee.

Recommendations

Councillor Palacio, seconded by Councillor Ashton, recommends:

1.   That the General Manager, Toronto Water, report to the next meeting of the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee on the feasibility of establishing a Toronto Water "Lead Content Mitigation Subsidy Program", similar to the Basement Flooding Prevention Subsidy Program, for households that have above the recommended level of lead content in their tap water.

Summary

Recent reports have underscored the depth and breadth of the lead contamination in Toronto's water supply. Some tests have suggested that literally tens of thousands of Toronto's households may be affected, which poses an ongoing and unacceptable public health risk, particularly to infants and expectant mothers. The creation of a subsidy program, similar to the successful Basement Flooding Prevention Subsidy Program, which grants homeowners funds to initiate measures that mitigate the flooding danger directly and urgently, would help to make Toronto's tap water safer almost immediately at minimal cost.

There are water filters (NSF/ANSI 53) and other inexpensive measures available which would be ideal to subsidize under such a program, and which will have an immediate impact on the safety of Toronto's drinking water. City Staff estimate that it may take up to 9 years for some lead services to be replaced. Almost a decade is a dangerous and unacceptable amount of time to expect residents to wait for this public health issue to be

addressed, especially when innovative ideas like these are available to address the risk very cheaply and quickly.

(Submitted to City Council on January 27 and 28, 2009 as MM30.5)