



## STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

### Caffeinated Energy Drinks

<b>Date:</b>	January 28, 2012
<b>To:</b>	Board of Health
<b>From:</b>	Medical Officer of Health
<b>Wards:</b>	All
<b>Reference Number:</b>	

#### **SUMMARY**

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The Toronto Drug Strategy Implementation Panel is proposing several motions to help address health and safety concerns related to the consumption of caffeinated energy drinks. The purpose of this report is to communicate Toronto Public Health's support of these motions, and to encourage endorsement by the Board of Health.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Medical Officer of Health recommends that:

1. The Board of Health endorse the motions in the attached communication from the Chair of the Toronto Drug Strategy Implementation Panel.

#### **Financial Impact**

There are no financial implications for the City of Toronto arising from this report.

#### **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

The Toronto Drug Strategy Implementation Panel, which reports to the Board of Health, is proposing several motions to help address health and safety concerns related to the consumption of caffeinated energy drinks and caffeinated alcoholic beverages. These motions are attached in a communication from Councillor Perks in his role as Chair of the Panel (see Attachment 1). To date, this issue has not been considered by the Board of Health.

Substance use and misuse issues are an important health issue for Toronto, and addressing the resulting harms is a responsibility of Toronto Public Health as set out in the provincial public health standards.

## **COMMENTS**

As noted in Councillor Perks' communication, there are health concerns related to the consumption of caffeinated energy drinks, including those mixed with alcohol. The proposed actions have been endorsed by other health units in Ontario, including the Middlesex-London Health Unit and Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health. The motions were also adopted by the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (ALPHA) at their June 2012 conference. Other groups have advocated for action on this issue, including the Centre for Addictions Research of British Columbia and the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse.

Toronto Public Health (TPH) is also concerned with the harms associated with caffeinated energy drinks, and has incorporated messages about energy drinks into health promotion strategies with children, youth and adults. Health information about energy drinks, in particular the risks of mixing these drinks with alcohol, are integrated into youth programs, workshops and educational materials. TPH included information about energy drinks into the recent social marketing campaign on the *Low Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines*. The topic of energy drinks is thoroughly addressed in the *Rethink What You Drink* initiative supporting children and youth in making healthy beverage choices through education and skill-building as well as in nutrition material available on the TPH website.

Building on current efforts, TPH supports the actions proposed by the Toronto Drug Strategy Implementation Panel.

## **CONTACT**

Jann Houston  
Director, Healthy Communities  
Toronto Public Health  
Phone: 416-338-2074  
Email: [jhouston@toronto.ca](mailto:jhouston@toronto.ca)

## **SIGNATURE**

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Dr. David McKeown  
Medical Officer of Health

## **ATTACHMENT**

Attachment 1: Communication from Councillor Perks, Chair, Toronto Drug Strategy Implementation Panel, *Caffeinated and Caffeinated-Alcoholic Energy Drinks*