



May 9, 2018

Ed Houghton
Executive Director
Ontario Municipal Water Association
2593 Tenth Concession
Collingwood, ON L9Y 3Y9

Dear Mr. Houghton,

Thank you for reaching out on behalf of the Ontario Municipal Water Association with important questions regarding Ontario's public water and infrastructure.

The Ontario NDP believes that access to safe and clean water is a human right and a public trust. We share the OMWA's values in support of transparent and accountable public ownership and public control of drinking water in the public interest.

Guided by such public values, we will create an Ontario Water Strategy to guide land use planning, environmental approvals and other government actions wherever the public's right to water is at stake.

We will work with municipalities, conservation authorities and other stakeholders to ensure that Source Water Protection Plans are implemented so every Ontarian has access to water that is safe for drinking, swimming and fishing — with no more water advisories.

We do not think it is acceptable that the federal government continues to allow nearly 90 First Nations communities in Ontario to go without safe drinking water. In partnership with the communities involved, we will invest the capital needed to ensure these communities have sustainable access to clean water. And we will send the bill to Ottawa.

We will clean up the mercury in the English-Wabigoon River system, so people in Grassy Narrows and Wabaseemoong First Nations can once again drink the water and eat the fish their communities have relied on for generations. And we will fund a dedicated mercury treatment centre so they can get the care they need after decades of mercury poisoning.



The Ontario NDP has MPPs from all regions of the province, representing both rural and urban ridings and communities of all sizes, and we understand that a one-size-fits-all approach does not work for Ontario municipalities, especially not municipalities in rural Ontario that face disproportionate burdens when it comes to water management.

We will increase the Ontario Municipal Partnership Fund to \$550 million, with regular increases in the subsequent years, to ensure that smaller municipalities have access to reliable funding to provide the municipal services people depend on.

With the new requirement of asset management plans, there is an opportunity to move away from arbitrary and inconsistent application-based infrastructure funding programs, towards more reliable and predictable funding programs that allow municipalities to make long-term plans. The Ontario NDP also recognizes that mandatory asset management planning, while beneficial, places disproportionate burdens on smaller communities. We will work with smaller municipalities to ensure that they have the capacity to fulfill provincial requirements.

Record flooding and storm events, made more frequent due to climate change, have exposed Ontario's lack of resiliency. After years of dithering and delays, Ontario needs a Climate Change Adaptation Plan more than ever. Working in partnership with municipalities, water authorities and other stakeholders, the Ontario NDP will finally deliver this adaptation plan, including strategies to build drainage systems, grow green infrastructure and manage severe storm events, with the necessary funding.

Once again, we thank you for reaching out with your important questions regarding water and infrastructure issues in Ontario. A New Democrat government will transition Ontario's economy and infrastructure to one that is modern, prosperous, environmentally sustainable and works for all Ontarians. We look forward to getting to work.

Best,

Ontario's New Democrats