



DRINKING WATER ADVISORIES FINALLY COMING TO AN END

After years of hard work and effort, the MSIFN has secured federal and provincial funding to end a decade of unsafe drinking water in members' homes

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Scugog, ON – The Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation (MSIFN) is pleased to announce that, after several years, three long-term drinking water advisories (DWAs) will be coming to an end on the reserve.

“For nearly a decade, our people have worked hard to achieve the promise that today’s announcement brings for our community,” MSIFN Chief Kelly LaRocca said. “The funding commitment from the federal government was a critical part of our long-term plan and we are grateful that DWAs for our First Nation will soon be a thing of the past.”

MSIFN began a water treatment feasibility study in November of 2014 with the hope that one day the First Nation would have complete access to clean drinking water. After years of hard work and collaboration, this goal is finally being achieved.

The federal government – through Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) – is contributing \$4.3 million towards this project. MSIFN has also secured an additional \$4.6 million from the Small Communities Fund, a partnership between the Governments of Canada and Ontario. Once completed, the long-term drinking water advisories on MSIFN territory will be permanently resolved.

This project is a sign of the federal government’s commitment to end DWAs on reserves across Canada. As the water treatment plant is expected to also benefit the neighbouring municipality of Scugog, this is an example of what can be achieved when all levels of government commit to working together with First Nations on a nation-to-nation basis.

“We look forward to the endless benefits this project will bring to our community and our neighbors in Scugog,” Chief LaRocca continued. “We hope that many more First Nations in Canada will soon be able benefit from the government’s commitment to end DWAs. Every child in this rich nation should have access to safe and clean drinking water in their homes,” Chief LaRocca continued.

In its history, MSIFN has had irregular access to a safe, reliable, communal water system in members’ homes. Health Canada implemented the current DWA in 2008 after numerous ongoing and intermittent advisories over the years. Despite these challenges, MSIFN has always ensured the Great Blue Heron Casino, the brand new Tim Hortons and the neighbouring service centre have always and will continue to have safe and clean drinking water. Today’s announcement means that once the new water treatment facility is built, MSIFN members will no longer have to boil or purchase water for use in their homes – they will finally have clean, safe drinking water straight from their taps.

Aside from the immediate benefits, today’s announcement means other MSIFN-planned projects, including the mixed-used facility, have one less hurdle to overcome before becoming a reality.

“Today is not about MSIFN’s past, it is about our future. We are excited to see our community continue to grow and succeed, and today’s announcement will play a big role in our bright future,” Chief LaRocca concluded.

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