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Date: July 29, 2020

Memorandum to: Drinking Water and Wastewater Systems Owners/Operating Authorities and Associations

From: Melissa Thomson, Assistant Deputy Minister, Chief Drinking Water Inspector, Drinking Water and Environmental Compliance Division (DWECD)

Subject: Changes to Temporary Emergency Order for Ontario's Water System Operators

Nothing is more important than protecting the health and well-being of Ontarians. As the province safely and gradually reopens, we have made changes to the [temporary emergency order](#) for water system operators, which I wrote to you about on March 24, 2020, to ensure the province's drinking water systems and sewage works continue to operate so that clean, safe drinking water is available to the public, and that our rivers and lakes are protected.

The amendments to the emergency order phase out provisions that temporarily allowed drinking water and wastewater systems to use qualified, non-certified staff and to redeploy staff to maintain system operations. Systems will have a transition period (until July 31, 2020) to reorganize and return to using certified and licensed staff.

In order to ensure operators can maintain their certifications and complete training requirements, the amendments also extend operator certificates and licences expiring between March 23, 2020 and October 31, 2020, and adjust training requirements for wastewater operators for the 2020 calendar year. Our expectation is that system owners and operating authorities will continue to consider alternative learning formats to keep operators' technical knowledge and skills up-to-date.

Program staff are here to support you during this transitional period. For additional information, see the FAQs under News and Resources on OWWCO's [News and Resources section](#).

Ontario's drinking water remains among the best protected in the world. As drinking water and wastewater system owners and operating authorities, you play a critical role within your communities. Working with our partners and municipalities, our strong protection framework will continue to help ensure our drinking water is held to Ontario's high safety standards.

Visit [Ontario.ca/reopen](https://ontario.ca/reopen) to learn about how Ontario is gradually reopening businesses, services and public spaces on a regional basis as progress is made in the fight against COVID-19.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Melissa Thomson', with a horizontal line underneath.

Melissa Thomson
Chief Drinking Water Inspector
Drinking Water and Environmental Compliance Division
Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks