



## NEWS RELEASE

### COVID-19 (Coronavirus) and UWSS Treated Drinking Water

Due to increased public concern in regards to the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak, the Union Water Supply System (UWSS) wants to assure the general public that the drinking water treated and supplied by UWSS to residents and businesses in the Municipality of Leamington, Town of Kingsville and parts of the Town of Essex and Town of Lakeshore continues to be safe to drink.

The World Health Organization (WHO) indicates that COVID-19 has not been detected in drinking water. It is important to know that the drinking water treatment process at UWSS facilities includes multiple barriers that provide protection to ensure safe drinking water. These barriers include chemically assisted coagulation, filtration and disinfection with chlorine gas, which are effective in removing and/or inactivating viruses.

Information provided by Health Canada indicate that coronaviruses such as COVID-19 are most commonly spread from an infected person through the following ways:

- Droplets released by coughing and sneezing;
- Close contact with others such as shaking hands and touching;
- Touching surfaces that have been contaminated with the virus and then touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

The Health Canada information indicates that these viruses are not known to spread through ventilation systems or through water.

The UWSS contracts with the Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) to provide operations and maintenance services for UWSS facilities. The UWSS, its contracted operator and local municipal water departments remain dedicated to supplying safe drinking water to local residents and businesses. As part of its Municipal Drinking Water License, the UWSS has developed a risk management and contingency plan to ensure continuity of drinking water treatment services during emergencies. This contingency plan is being put into action as the situation changes with the COVID-19 outbreak.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the UWSS' Ruthven Water Treatment Plant at (519) 326-4447 or contact your local municipal water department.

Additional information on the UWSS is available at [www.unionwater.ca](http://www.unionwater.ca). Additional resources about the COVID-19 outbreak is available from the following sources:

- [Windsor Essex County Health Unit \(WECHU\)](#)
- [Public Health Ontario](#)
- [Health Canada](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)