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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Health Unit Testing Water At Local Beaches Following Weekend Sewage Spill

Pump Malfunction Caused by Lightning Strike

Monday, June 21, 2010, Peterborough

This morning Public Health Inspectors from the Peterborough County-City Health Unit will be testing the water adjacent to the beaches at Rogers Cove, Beavermead Park, Squirrel Creek and Hiawatha First Nation following the sewage spill that occurred on June 19 at the Lakefield Sewage Treatment Plant.

The public is advised not to swim in the Otonabee River or Trent Severn Waterway south of Lakefield at this time. The beaches at Rogers Cove, and Beavermead Park remain closed to swimming due to potential health risks caused by the possibility of an increase in E. Coli bacteria. Today, the beach at Squirrel Creek will be closed until further notice. If testing confirms E. Coli counts are normal, these beaches will be reopened.

The pump malfunction at the Lakefield Sewage Treatment Plant was caused by a lightning strike during an evening thunderstorm on Saturday, June 19. This caused the pump to burn out and also deactivated the phone system used to notify treatment plant staff of any problems with plant operations. An estimated 450 cubic meters of raw sewage spilled into the Otonabee River because of the malfunction. A temporary solution is in place for the pumping of sewage and the Ministry of the Environment is following up with the Lakefield Sewage Treatment Plant. There is no untreated effluent being discharged now.

The Health Unit continues to advise local residents not to consume any untreated water directly from the Otonabee River system because of the risk of contamination.

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For further information, please contact:

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NEWS RELEASE