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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **HAMILTON MAY EXPERIENCE MUSTY TASTE AND ODOUR IN DRINKING WATER**

**HAMILTON, ON ? September 3, 2004 ?** Hamilton residents may notice a musty taste or odour in their drinking water. This typically occurs in the late summer or early fall and is generally experienced by all municipalities that draw water from Lake Ontario and Lake Erie. Those who are very sensitive to odours, are more likely to notice the change in taste and odour. Residents are advised that the City's drinking water is safe and this odour poses no health impact and is strictly aesthetics.

Typically, the odour causing compounds are more prominent during extended warm temperatures (above 15 degrees Celsius) throughout Lake Ontario. As a result, we may experience increases in naturally occurring compounds which can create a musty odour or taste in drinking water. The compounds, geosmin and 2-methylisoborneol (MIB), can be detected by humans at very low levels. Geosmin and MIB are produced by the bacteria called Actinomycetes and some species of blue-green algae, though the exact organisms are not known.

Hamilton's Woodward Water Treatment Plant uses granular activated carbon (GAC) to assist in providing quality drinking water. The latest results indicate that GAC is reducing odour causing compounds by as much as 90% and all efforts continue to be made to further reduce the presence of these compounds in our drinking water.

Drinking water in Hamilton is tested at the Environmental Laboratory on Woodward Avenue. The Laboratory has been equipped with modern and sensitive instrumentation that allow the identification and quantification of trace amounts of organic and inorganic pollutants in water.

For more information on aspects of taste and odour in drinking water, geosmin and MIB, please visit the following websites: [Ontario Water Works Research Consortium](#), [Environment Canada](#), [American Water Works Association](#)..

For more information on Hamilton's Water Treatment facilities, please call 905-546-CITY (2489) or visit [www.hamilton.ca/water](http://www.hamilton.ca/water).

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