

Murray Kennedy

From: awwa-compliance-list@listserv.awwa.org
Sent: Thursday, 1 June 2000 02:53
To: awwa-compliance-list@listserv.awwa.org
Subject: Compliance Forum: Waterborne disease outbreaks

A message from an American Water Works Association (AWWA) discussion forum. AWWA is Dedicated to Safe Drinking Water.

Forum: Compliance Forum
Thread: Waterborne disease outbreaks
Posted Date: 31-May-00 at 0853 AM
Posted By: Fred Pontius (fredp@pontiuswater.com)

***** Message *****

Canadian E-coli epidemic kills seventh victim

TORONTO, May 31 (Reuters) - Deadly E. coli bacteria that tainted a small Ontario town's drinking water has claimed a seventh life in Canada's worst outbreak of the illness, hospital officials said on Wednesday.

Ontario's London Health Sciences Centre, where three small children remain critically ill, reported that a seventh person died late on Tuesday but gave no details.

The death toll from the epidemic in Walkerton, Ontario had risen to six earlier on Tuesday when an elderly woman died at the South Bruce Grey Health Center in the grieving town, which lies about 125 miles (200 km) northwest of Toronto, media reports said.

Four other adults and a child were killed last week by the illness, which infected more than 1,000 of Walkerton's 5,000 residents.

E. coli (Escherichia coli) is usually found in the intestines of humans and animals. Some strains -- like the often lethal O157 variety that hit Walkerton -- can cause dangerous, even life-threatening infections.

Officials do not yet know exactly how the deadly bug got into the water but suspect recent heavy rains may have washed E-coli-infected manure into the farming community's system.

Symptoms include fever, severe cramping, diarrhea and vomiting. It can take two to 10 days for symptoms to appear and normally about a week for patients to recover. The illness kills about five percent of its victims by overcoming their kidneys.

The E. coli outbreak has shattered Walkerton's peace and left its residents shaken and angry. Townspeople have accused civic officials of a cover-up, and health officials have charged that the local utilities commission knew as early as mid-May that the local tap water was contaminated but failed to warn the public of the danger.

The Ontario Provincial Police, the coroners office and the Environment Ministry have all launched probes into the contamination.

Meanwhile, media reports said that the town of Shelburne, Ontario, has found E-coli in water samples from one well which they have since shut down. However, the bacteria has not been found in the general water distribution system, the Canadian Press reported.
End of Message

Murray Kennedy

From: awwa-compliance-list@listserv.awwa.org
Sent: Thursday, 1 June 2000 06:11
To: awwa-compliance-list@listserv.awwa.org
Subject: Compliance Forum: Waterborne disease outbreaks

A message from an American Water Works Association (AWWA) discussion forum. AWWA is Dedicated to Safe Drinking Water.

Forum: Compliance Forum
Thread: Waterborne disease outbreaks
Posted Date: 31-May-00 at 12:11 PM
Posted By: Fred Pontius (fredp@pontiuswater.com)

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\$1 billion suit launched in Walkerton

Mon May 29 11:05:38 2000

WALKERTON, ONTARIO -A lawsuit has been filed in Walkerton over the E. coli outbreak. This action seeks \$1 billion in general and specific damages.

Lawyer Robert Garcia launched the suit on behalf of 1,000 people on Friday.

It names Walkerton, the Town of Brockton, the Public Utilities Commission, the Bruce-Grey Health Unit and the province of Ontario.

On Thursday, lawyer Scott Ritchie announced that he had been retained by a group of Walkerton residents to launch a class-action lawsuit.

The insurance company that covers Walkerton has sent a team of lawyers to the community to prepare for the legal actions.

End of Message