



### GEORGINA

**Subject:** Update on Public Water Taps

**To:** Mayor and Council

**From:** Rob Flindall, Director, Operations and Infrastructure

**Date:** November 17, 2021

#### **Briefing:**

At the meeting on September 22, 2021, Council was advised that staff are in process of closing these taps due the concerns related to potential backflow and contamination of the municipal drinking water system. Staff noted that the public taps are unmetered and uncontrolled, and that potential contamination of the system through backflow of non-potable water was public safety concern that should be addressed. Council requested that Staff investigate interim measures to ensure that existing users will continue to have access to potable water.

At the meeting on October 6, 2021, Council was advised that upon further review and discussion with stakeholders, the public water tap located at Black River Road and Park Drive would remain open with modifications until a long-term solution could be investigated and implemented.

Since October 6th, the following has been undertaken:

- Three public water taps at Boyers Road, Kennedy Road and High Street have been closed as of the week of October 18. Information on the closure of the three taps and how to access the Black River Road tap has been provided through signage at each of the public water taps, the Town's website and through customer service.
- The Black River Road tap has been enclosed and a locked door has been placed on the enclosure to control access. Keys can be obtained by residents for the tap at the Water and Wastewater Operations yard at 26817 Civic Centre Road for a deposit of \$20. This deposit will be returned when the resident returns the key in future. Keys were available for pick up by residents 5 days prior to the door being installed.

- Approximately 150 keys have been picked up to date to access the Black River Road tap.
- The upper level tap has been re-installed to address concerns for elderly residents having to lift heavy containers when using the lower tap. A table to rest the jugs on during filling has been added.
- A backflow preventer has been installed on the Black River Road tap to protect the overall system.
- A new water meter has been installed to monitor the usage over time.
- The tap has been retrofitted so additional devices cannot be screwed onto the tap.
- Security cameras have been installed to monitor the site and ensure commercial users are not using the tap. The cameras will also allow staff to monitor the site to determine if line-ups etc. are occurring.
- The Hydro-One Parking Lot will be re-graded by Town staff to eliminate potholes.
- Arrangements have been made for winter maintenance of the site.
- For larger volume residential users, the bulk water station at the Water and Wastewater Yard has been retrofitted to allow access for smaller amounts of water. One hundred dollar (\$100.00) bulk water purchase cards can be purchased over the phone from Customer Service and picked up at the Water and Wastewater Operations yard. Water dispensed from the Bulk-filling station is sold at the current combined water/wastewater rate (\$5.44/cu.metre).

### **Next Steps**

A 2022 capital project has been recommended for the replacement of the residential water taps and the bulk water-filling station. Operations & Infrastructure staff have retained an engineering consultant (The Municipal Infrastructure Group Ltd. (TMIG) to assist with the selection of a centralized location for both the bulk water-filling station and the residential water tap(s). The consultant will assist staff with equipment selection and undertake any design for the capital works.

Staff and the engineering consultant will review similar residential dispensing systems found in other rural and northern municipalities such as the District of Muskoka. The preferred location for the residential water tap will be at or adjacent to a municipal facility where access can be monitored and controlled. At this time a recommended location has not been identified. Staff anticipate reporting back with the recommended location in January 2022.

Staff will be monitoring the usage of the Black River tap, and seeking feed-back from users over the next 8-12 weeks to assist with the design of the new system.

**Photo 1 – Black River Road Public Tap with Enclosure**



**Photo 2 – Dispensing Tap with Bottle Stand**

