

**FAXED**  
14/1/97

## **Nunavut Water Board**

P.O. Box 119  
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(403)360-6338  
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January 13, 1997

Mr. William Noah  
Mayor  
The Hamlet of Baker Lake  
Baker Lake, NT  
X0C 0A0

SUBJECT:     **Drinking Water Quality**

Dear Mr. Mayor,

At its last sitting of December 2, 1996 in Kugluktuk, the Nunavut Water Board discussed the issue of potential health and environmental problems of the current dog pound area in Baker Lake. This issue has been raised by residents of Baker Lake several times with the members and staff of the Nunavut Water Board, and we would like to offer some assistance and advice to the Hamlet of Baker Lake to resolve it.

As you may know, the presence of bacteria, viruses and other pathogenic organisms in natural waters is directly linked to human or animal activity. Most of the time, the presence of these organisms in water is closely associated with the incidence of many diseases which severity may range from diarrhea to dehydration to death in the most severe cases. Some of these pathological organisms cannot be eradicated by chlorination and are easily transmitted to humans through drinking water. Here, the presence of many dogs more or less permanently located near the drinking water intake of your community is a cause of serious concern for many Baker Lake residents and for the Nunavut Water Board.

While we did not review the current data on the quality of the drinking water at the water intake, we think that the situation nevertheless deserves some attention. In any case, we have contacted the Environmental Health Department of the Keewatin Health Board in Rankin Inlet about this and expect to obtain their most recent data on water quality at Baker Lake and their guidelines with respect to the siting of dog pounds. However, even if the water at the source was indeed of good quality, the perception by some residents that it is polluted may encourage them to use alternate sources of drinking water that they may perceive as cleaner but that could be contaminated or unsafe at certain times of the year. Moreover, the growth rate of the population of your community, and by extension the number of dogs as well, has an impact on the quality of the surface runoff in Baker Lake and may affect the quality of your drinking water, particularly in the springtime.

In this regard, we believe that the relocation of the dog pound area to a more suitable location, away from the drinking water intake, may be the most appropriate and sensible solution. Although it would create temporary annoyance to dog owners, the benefits for health, the environment and the aesthetics of the community would greatly surpass their inconvenience.

The Nunavut Water Board will hold its next Board meeting in Baker Lake on February 18, 1997. I suggest that we use this opportunity to discuss this matter with you and the members of your community during a public meeting with the Board and the Hamlet on the evening of February 17.

Meanwhile, do not hesitate to contact Thomas Kudloo, Chairperson of the Nunavut Water Board (819-793-2140 or 2560) or the undersigned (403-360-6338) should you require any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "P. di Pizzo". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "P" and a trailing flourish.

Philippe di Pizzo  
Executive Director

c.c. Lesley Moody, Keewatin Health Board