

Updates to the Drinking Water Quality Management Standard ERO Proposal 019-8413

Overview

On behalf of Oxford County, we would like to express our support for the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks proposed revisions to the Drinking Water Quality Management Standard (DWQMS). As the Operating Authority of 17 Drinking Water Systems, which supplies water to 21 communities, our DWQMS is the framework for maintaining consistent operations. We support the intentions to continually improve the DWQMS Elements and to clarify the intentions of the Standard.

Comments

Following review, two Elements were identified where improved clarity would help eliminate ambiguity in demonstrating conformance:

- **Element 12: Communications** – The proposed change to require communication on relevant aspects of the Quality Management System with *all* suppliers may introduce confusion regarding which aspects are considered essential to operations, as defined in Element 13 Essential Supplies and Services.
- **Element 20: management review** – The addition of the requirement to communicate relevant outcomes of the management review with Operating Authority personnel is valuable and achievable. However, it would benefit from clearer guidance on what constitutes “relevant” information.

The following was found to be a positive addition which would enhance our current practices:

- **Element 21: continual improvement** – The proposed updates improve alignment with standard processes for identifying and managing Quality Management System corrective actions and clarify the intent of preventive actions. These changes support and strengthen the County’s existing approach to identifying, responding to, correcting, and preventing incidents.

Conclusion

The proposed revisions to the QMS Elements reflect meaningful progress and alignment with the County’s operational practices. While certain areas could benefit from greater clarity to support consistent interpretation and implementation, the updates overall are a positive step forward. We appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback and remain committed to continuous improvement and collaboration in strengthening our Quality Management System.

Angela Vander Gugten
Supervisor of Compliance and Programs