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Keith Norton: Says U.S. is responsible for pollution in Niagara

Our water is safe to drink: Norton

By Joe O'Donnell
Toronto Star

Although Ontario's drinking water is far from pure, it's still entirely safe for human consumption, Environment Minister Keith Norton says.

Norton was responding yesterday in the Legislature to charges by a citizens' group in Niagara Falls, N.Y., that their water is unfit to drink.

"As I have stated in the past . . . treated water supplies serving Niagara-on-the Lake, Niagara Falls and Fort Erie meet federal and provincial criteria for drinking water," Norton said.

But, he added that he's still not satisfied that the

U.S. is doing enough to crack down on its sources of pollution in the Niagara River.

"Canadian and Ontario surveillance activity indicates that the Niagara River is a continuous source of numerous metals and organic compounds to Lake Ontario," he said.

And less than 1 per cent of that pollution is from Canadian sources, he said.

"It is estimated in our updated report that the U.S. discharges exceed Canadian discharges by more than 1 billion litres a day," Norton said, referring to a report prepared by his ministry and Environment Canada.