

TESTING TESTING TESTING

Drinking water 'allegedly' pure

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We wish to correct the impression that the story, "Water in Metro called purest" (Nov. 25/81) may have left on your readers. Pollution Probe has never pronounced Toronto's drinking water "safe." The water does meet conventional standards, but since these standards apply to only 42 of the 381 chemical contaminants

known to plague Lake Ontario, they should not be relied on as any guarantee of safety.

Low levels of industrial contaminants such as benzene, toluene and methylene chloride are present in Metro's allegedly pure water supply (according to the Ministry of the Environment's own data), and health officials generally

acknowledge that these contaminants, for which no guidelines exist, have the potential to cause long-term health effects. These same contaminants are not removed by the treatment processes practised in Metro Toronto.

It is our well-founded fear that the water in Lake Ontario will deteriorate if the discharges to the Niagara River are not stopped. Indeed the latest Niagara River report from the Canada-Ontario Review Board indicates that many of the contaminants in the Niagara River have been found more frequently and in higher maximum concentrations in 1980 than in 1979.

Until this situation is brought under control, we believe that upgrading the treatment processes is a necessary insurance policy against the future degradation of our source of supply.

ANNE WORDSWORTH
Pollution Probe
Toronto