



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

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Mount Polley Mine Communiqué #5

August 12, 2014

The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) received the results of August 7 and 8 water quality samples collected by Ministry of Environment (MoE) from Polley Lake and evaluated them against the Health Canada Drinking Water Guidelines. Samples were collected in 2 locations and were analysed for physical parameters, nutrients, and total and dissolved metals.

Results indicate that **samples meet the Health Canada Drinking Water Guidelines with the following exceptions:**

- pH, Turbidity, and Aluminum exceeded the recommended guidelines. It should be noted these are operational parameters considered in the operation of drinking water treatment systems and are not considered a health risk at the present time.

At 2:00 PM today, Interior Health removed the *Do Not Use* drinking water advisory for all areas except the Impact Zone located within 100 meters of the debris plume. Interior Health advises that it is safe to use the water for drinking, personal use, fishing, swimming and recreational purposes from all areas except the Impact Zone. Additionally, the Interior Health Medical Health Officer has deemed consumption of fish to be safe. Additional information from Interior Health can be found: www.interiorhealth.ca/YourEnvironment/EmergencyPreparedness/Pages/MajorEvents.aspx

The FNHA will be supporting First Nations to conduct salmon testing at the request of affected First Nations. To date 13 communities have requested sampling. Testing will be conducted for heavy metals in the flesh of the fish; heavy metals are of human health concern and were found in the Mount Polley tailing pond sediment. Samples will be compared to 2013 fish samples where available.

Fish samples will be collected by First Nations harvesters and sent to a lab for analysis with a 3 day turn-around is expected for lab results. Lab results will be shared with local First Nations, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Health Canada, Ministry of Environment and Interior Health. The FNHA will be working with an independent professional risk assessor to support First Nations and interpret and share the results.

The FNHA recognizes the mental, emotional and spiritual aspects of this environmental crisis. If mental or emotional health supports are required, please connect with our regional team: cheryl.stump@fnha.ca

Additionally, the Disaster Psychosocial Program through Emergency Management BC, Cariboo Regional district, Provincial Health Services Authority has a support team of trained volunteers available to offer local residents emotional support for their unique impacts and coping needs. This program is coordinated through the Cariboo Regional District. For accurate and up to date information, please visit the Cariboo Regional District's Emergency Operations Facebook page at www.facebook.com/CRDemergencyoperations or the CRD website at www.cariboord.ca. A public information line is available at 250-398-5581 during Emergency Operations Centre hours.

The FNHA will continue to receive and review new data and assess for public health risks.

For updates on the Mount Polley Mine event and FNHA public health response please visit: www.fnha.ca/about/news-and-events/news/mount-polley-mine-communicues-and-press-releases