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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TOWN AIMS TO PROTECT WATER SUPPLY WITH CROSS-CONNECTION CONTROL PROGRAM

(Antigonish, NS) – The Town of Antigonish plays an important role in contributing to the overall health and well-being of its residents, which includes being able to provide safe and clean drinking water. That is why the Town of Antigonish, with the support of the Nova Scotia Department of Environment, will continue implementing its Backflow Prevention Program. The Town’s Backflow Prevention Program meets the regulatory requirement of the Nova Scotia Department of Environment to establish a cross-connection control program.

“Our Backflow Prevention Program is an essential risk-management initiative to protect our water supply. The Town has developed a comprehensive cross-connection control program and submitted a detailed plan to the Nova Scotia Department of Environment,” said Jeff Lawrence, Chief Administrative Officer of the Town of Antigonish. “Both the Town and the Department of Environment are working cooperatively to certify proper and timely installation of backflow prevention devices on water services lines where there is a significant potential for backflow, such as those with sprinkler systems.”

The requirement for a cross-connection control program is included in the Town’s permit to operate a Water Utility system and the Town’s permit was renewed on April 1, 2018. The Town has identified approximately 70 institutions, businesses and properties where there is a possible high risk of contamination if backflow occurs, due to sprinkler systems. As part of this program, the Town has addressed seven of its own buildings, which have since been refitted to fulfill the new program standards. Under this program, customers assume responsibility for the cost of installing and testing backflow prevention devices. Annual testing is required to ensure the mechanical device remains in proper working order.

A [media release](#) and updates to the [Town of Antigonish’s website](#) were published prior to approximately 30 letters being issued by the Town to businesses/property owners on July 20, 2018. The letter advised owners that if their properties had backflow prevention devices already installed, they were asked to verify and provide an annual test, so the Water Utility could ensure the installation was proper and records could be maintained. Those who did not have backflow prevention devices installed were given 90 days to arrange for an assessment and installation. In some cases, the Town has provided extensions and is working cooperatively with those business/property owners who submitted a written plan of action and need additional time to complete the required work.

The Nova Scotia Department of Environment has advised the Town that other municipalities are required to establish cross connection control programs as a standard condition within their operating permits. The Department has ensured they will continue working collaboratively with the Town as both parties focus, with the help of its customers, on reducing risks to the municipal water supply.

The protection of the Town’s potable water supply is crucial to the sustainability of the community. It is the responsibility of the Town, Nova Scotia Department of Environment and property owners to do their part to ensure all residents and businesses can access safe drinking water.

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