



Report to: General Committee

Meeting Date: April 30, 2024

SUBJECT: The MECP – Markham Distribution System – Drinking Water Inspection Report, January 30, 2024

PREPARED BY: Helena Frantzke, Ext. 2449
Water Quality Coordinator

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the report entitled “The MECP – Markham Distribution System – Drinking Water Inspection Report, January 30, 2024” be received;
2. And that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Not Applicable

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the findings of the Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP)’s Inspection of Markham’s Water Distribution System undertaken on January 30, 2024. This MECP inspection covered regulatory compliance since our last inspection conducted, from January 27, 2023 to January 22, 2024.

BACKGROUND:

The objective of the MECP Inspection is to provide a rigorous and comprehensive inspection program for municipal residential drinking water systems to determine if the systems are in compliance with the Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002 (SDWA) and associated Regulations as well as evaluating conformance with ministry drinking water policies and guidelines during the inspection period. The Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002 (SDWA) states that a provincial officer may at any reasonable time conduct an inspection for the purpose of determining compliance with regulatory requirements contained within the Act, or any of the associated Regulations. Traditionally, the MECP has conducted an annual inspection of Markham’s Water Distribution System.

On January 30, 2024 the MECP conducted an unannounced annual inspection of Markham’s Drinking Water Distribution System. Since the last inspection date held last year on January 26, 2023, the MECP Inspector reviewed Waterworks procedures, policies and records covered within the inspection period between January 27, 2023 to January 22, 2024.

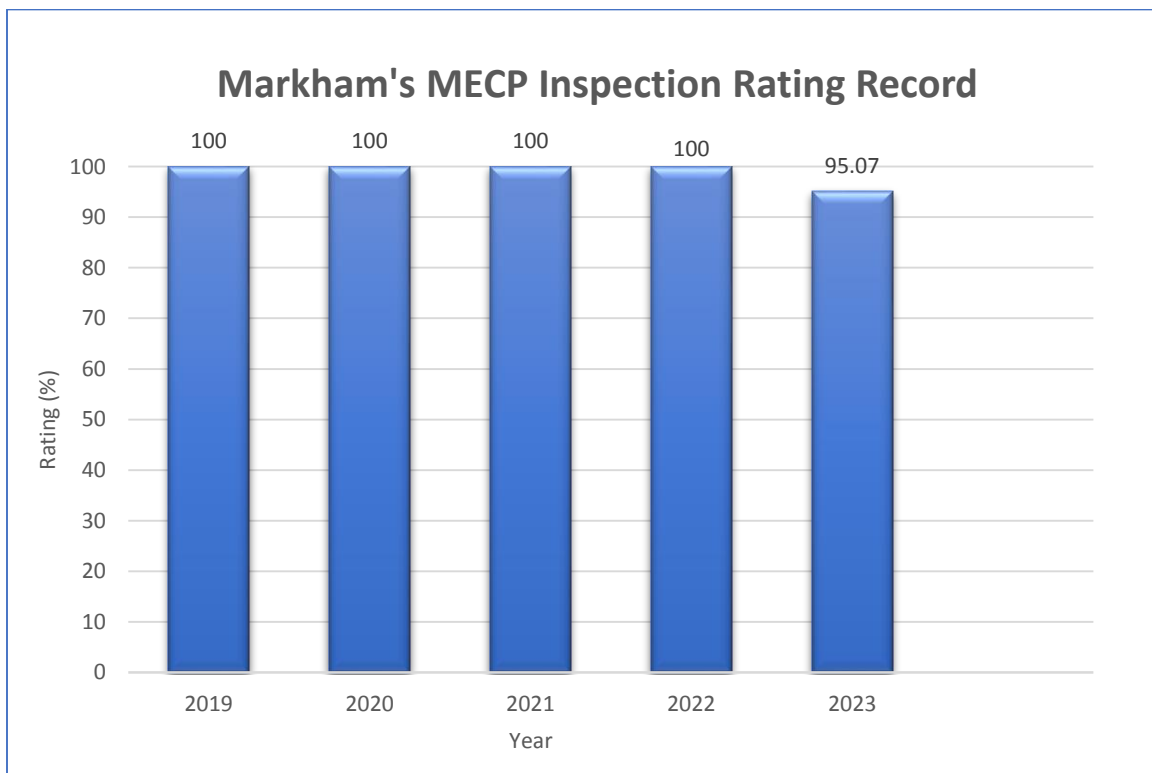
The final MECP inspection report was received on March 01, 2024, (see attachment “A”).

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

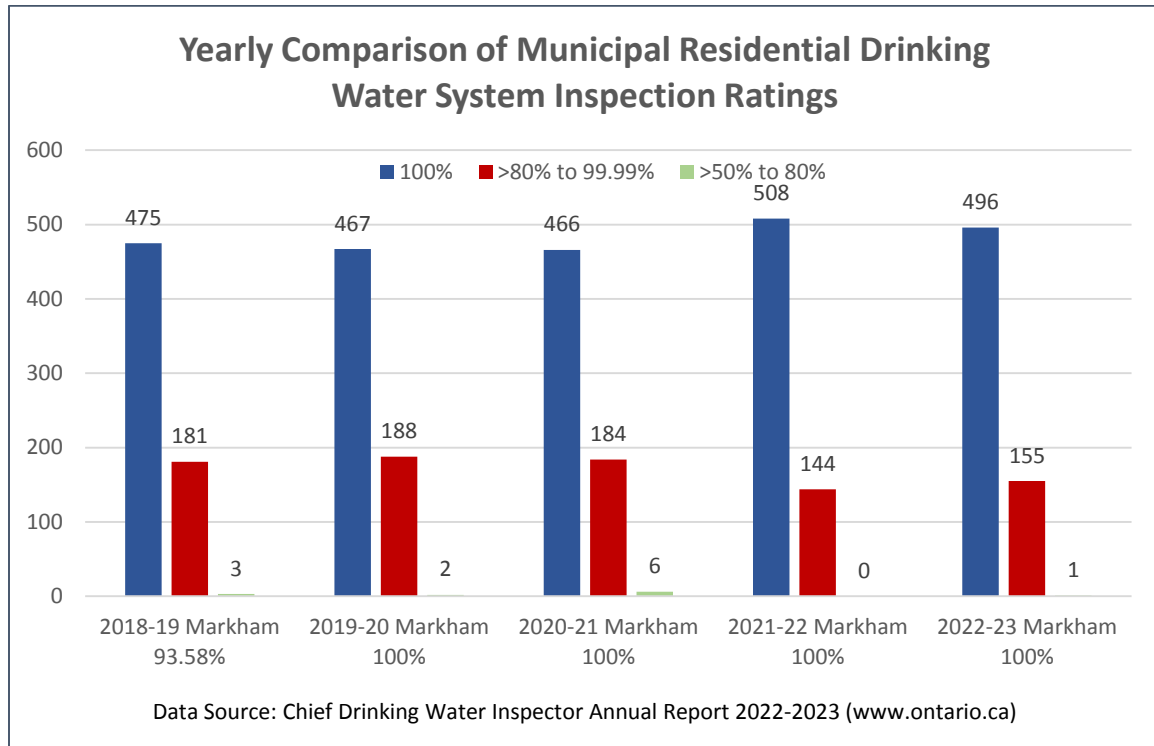
On January 30, 2024 the MECP Inspector conducted an unannounced inspection on site with staff which included a detailed discussion with regard to Markham Waterwork’s existing procedures, reviewed operational logbooks and also took a water sample. Following the on-site inspection the MECP Inspector provided a detailed list requesting data and documents which were all provided by staff in a timely manner.

During the inspection time period, between January 27, 2023 to January 22, 2024, one (1) incident of regulatory non-compliance was identified. During an Adverse Water Quality Incident (AWQI) all verbal notifications were not immediately provided as per O. Reg. 170/03 Section 16-6. As a result, the City of Markham received an Inspection Summary Rating Record (IRR) of 95.07% for not meeting full compliance with the MECP’s Drinking Water Systems Regulation 170/03 during the period covered. This IRR is a quantitative measures the Municipal Residential Drinking Water System’s annual inspection and regulated water quality testing performance The MECP’s inspection program is an important aspect of the MECP’s drinking water safety net and the primary goal is to encourage ongoing improvement of drinking water systems and to work toward the goal of 100% regulatory compliance.

Below is a summary of Markham’s MECP Inspection Summary Rating Records over the past five years:



Below is a comparison of Markham’s MECP Inspection Rating Records to other municipalities over the last five years. The 2023-2024 Municipal Inspection Ratings will be published by December 2024 by the MECP that will capture our latest rating.



Details of Non-Compliance Identified for the January 27, 2023 to January 22, 2024 Inspection Period

On May 09, 2023, a Category 2 Watermain Break occurred. When an Operator observes that contaminated water may possibly have been directed to users, the watermain break would be categorized as a Category 2 Observation Watermain Break and staff is required to provide immediate verbal notification to the MECP and the local Ministry of Public Health Department (MOH) as an Adverse Water Quality Incident (AWQI). After it was determined the watermain break was to be categorized as a Category 2 Observation Watermain Break, the on-call Supervisor only provided immediate verbal notification of the incident to the MECP and immediate verbal notification was not provided to the MOH by the on-call Supervisor.

On May 10, 2024, upon providing written notification to the MECP and MOH waterworks staff discovered that no immediate verbal notification was provided to the MOH. Staff provided all other notifications as required.

Even though immediate notification was not provided to the MOH, all corrective actions were followed properly and the watermain was repaired the same day; a non-compliance was issued by the MECP for not providing immediate notification to the MOH as required under Ontario Regulation 170/03.

On May 17, 2023 an After Action Review was also conducted to determine the root cause of the incident and determine actions to prevent this non-compliance from reoccurring in the future. Minutes of the meeting were taken and the following actions have been put in place by Waterworks staff with regard to the notification process for Adverse Water Quality Incidents (AWQIs):

1. The Adverse Notification Quick Reference Checklist was modified to clearly identify key agencies and their contact numbers. Previous to this incident the Checklist was used as a guideline to assist with the notification requirements however has now become a mandatory requirement to be filled out by staff reporting any AWQI. Subsequently the SOP16b Response to Adverse Water Quality Test Results was updated to include this checklist as a mandatory requirement to be completed.
2. The Break Sheet was revised to reference clearly indicated a CAT 2 WMB to be reported as an AWQI.
3. A refresher to all Operators to ensure the protocol for WMBs and associated notifications are clear and review the changes made to the Break Sheet.
4. The AWQI notification process was reviewed with all Waterworks Supervisors.

MECP BEST PRACTICE ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are suggestions that the owner or operating authority should consider implementing in order to advance efforts already in place.

There were no best practice issues or recommendations identified during this inspection period. As a result of the proactive work Waterworks staff completed following the After Action Review, it covered all required actions that the MECP would have issued as a result of the non-compliance incident. The MECP encourages to continually educate and train operators and continue with the after action review process.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Not Applicable

HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS

Not Applicable

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

The MECP – Markham Distribution System Drinking Water Inspection Report, January 30, 2024 meets legislative requirements and is consistent with the Building Markham’s Future Together; specifically, a Safe, Sustainable & Complete Community through achieving sustainable Infrastructure Management and Quality Services.

BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Not Applicable

The report presented herein, communicates the results of the annual MECP Inspection conducted on January 30, 2024.

The undersigned represent the Top Management of the City of Markham's Drinking Water Distribution system and by signing below the Top management of the Operating Authority have reviewed the MECP Inspection Report.

RECOMMENDED BY:

Eddy Wu, P. Eng.
Director, Environmental Services

Morgan Jones
Commissioner, Community Services

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment "A" – The MECP - Markham Distribution System – Drinking Water Inspection Report, January 30, 2024.