

Region deals with cost of new water testing

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province.

"There are a lot of ways we can get into trouble by not paying attention to every detail in these reports," Ms Korolnek said in calling for the hirings.

Expenses incurred so far and others that can be expected, include:

- The region's takeover of the Ansnorveldt water supply system in the Holland Marsh, an expense of more than \$400,000. Ms Korolnek said the region may be ordered to take over other, similar operations;

- The hiring of consultants to conduct reviews of each water supply plant. Recommended capital improvements are now being implemented;

- Increased requirements for monitoring and testing, including a seven-day-a-week regimen, for

water clarity tests at regional wells;

- Lawyers fees to fight a number of provincial work orders;

- Added demands on the health department for monitoring and testing;

- Staff training for provincial certification;

- Ongoing expenses related to staffing, lab fees, vehicles and other expenditures totalling about \$250,000 a year, she said.

"It looks like we are going to be assuming a lot of responsibility,"

The long list of expenditures left politicians wondering how to deal with the expected costs to regional taxpayers.

"It looks like we are going to be assuming a lot of responsibility," said Richmond Hill Mayor Bill Bell.



WAYNE EMMERSON: Mayor of Whitchurch-Stouffville says region should encourage more testing.

"And I'm wondering if there's any way we can charge for the (testing) service."

That thought struck a chord with CAO Michael Garrett, who agreed cost recovery options

should be examined. "I'm a big fan of user fees," he said.

But Whitchurch-Stouffville Mayor Wayne Emmerson said fees for services such as well water testing would be rejected by homeowners. And the region should be encouraging more testing, not less, he said.

"I don't know whether people in rural areas will pay to have their wells tested as much as they should," he said.

Regional politicians also pondered accountability, debating the possibility of the region assuming all levels of water supply in the future. Right now the region is responsible for source water and treatment, while local municipalities handle distribution to customers.

Under the new regulations, municipal employees and politicians can be found liable for problems associated with water systems.

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