

Media Release

May 10, 2021

COVID-19 Wastewater Testing in Chatham

Beginning today, Chatham will have local untreated wastewater tested for traces of COVID-19 from fecal shedding.

This initiative is the result of a collaborative partnership between Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks, University of Windsor, Chatham-Kent Public Utilities Commission, and CK Public Health.

COVID-19 wastewater surveillance programs are utilized in many regions, and the data has been useful in pandemic management. Increases in COVID-19 sewage markers can serve as an early warning indicator of increased community transmission. Wastewater analysis trends can be used to inform public health mitigation efforts, such as targeted testing efforts and enhanced infection control recommendations.

“I am excited to get access to this kind of data which will give us a very useful indicator of the baseline infection level in Chatham,” said Dr. David Colby, Medical Officer of Health, CK Public Health.

Initially, the wastewater surveillance program will focus on Chatham with the opportunity to expand to other areas within Chatham-Kent.

“Chatham-Kent Public Utilities Commission is proud to be an active partner in the wastewater surveillance program, assisting CK Public Health with the collection of untreated wastewater that will be used for analysis,” said Tim Sunderland, General Manager, Chatham-Kent Public Utilities Commission.

Wastewater surveillance is another tool in our fight against COVID-19 and will not replace public health measures that are already in effect. CK Public Health reminds residents to follow the current stay at home order, physically distance 2m from people outside of household members, avoid gathering indoors, and wear masks.

For more information about what you can do to help control the spread of COVID-19 in Chatham-Kent, please visit www.ckphu.com.



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