AWWAO — The Water Stream August 2026

New First Nations Water Legislation Introduced

On June 16, 2026, the Government of Canada introduced new legislation respecting source water, drinking water, wastewater, and related infrastructure on First Nation lands.

Why It Matters

The proposed legislation aims to:

- Support safe drinking water
- Strengthen wastewater management
- Improve source water protection
- Address long-term infrastructure funding needs

Positive Steps Forward

Chiefs of Ontario welcomed several aspects of the legislation, including:

- Continued recognition of source water protection
- Commitments to address the full costs of water and wastewater systems
- Establishment of minimum standards for drinking water systems

Areas Still Under Discussion

First Nations leadership has also raised concerns regarding:

- Recognition of First Nations rights and jurisdiction
- Changes related to water protection zones
- Future collaboration with First Nations during regulatory development

What Happens Next?

The legislation will move through the parliamentary review process. Chiefs of Ontario and First Nations leadership will continue working with Canada to strengthen the bill and ensure it reflects First Nations priorities.

Key Takeaway

The legislation is viewed as an important step toward improving water and wastewater services in First Nations communities, while recognizing that additional work is needed to strengthen protections and support First Nations jurisdiction
over water.

Stay Informed

This legislation may influence future water and wastewater operations, funding opportunities, and source water protection initiatives in First Nations communities.

Why Source Water Matters

✓ **Protects** drinking water quality
✓ **Reduces** treatment challenges
✓ **Supports** community health

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