



CLEAN DRINKING WATER BEYOND SCOPE FOR HOMELESS

TORONTO – June 2, 2022 – Clean drinking water is a readily accessible resource for most Canadians yet beyond the reach of those in our community living on the streets, leaving them vulnerable to dehydration and ultimately death. On average, a person living in a temperate climate requires 3 liters (13 cups) of fluid intake a day to maintain adequate hydration for proper bodily function. Access to life-saving water remains a challenge for relief agencies and outreach programs that provide aid to those living in shelters and on our city streets. The problem is growing – the aftershock of COVID, the lack of affordable housing, the opioid crisis, poor hygiene, and a steady increase in refugees mean that the mortality rate among this high-risk group could surpass critical numbers.

In an insurmountable act of compassion, corporate partners BlueTriton Brands; Fortigo Freight Services, Toronto Police Services, CIBC, Scotiabank and Perimeter Development Corp will distribute over 400,000 bottles of water and essential items through *Project Water* to outreach providers and homeless shelters in an effort to provide life-saving resources to the homeless in extreme summer weather conditions: **Wednesday, June 15, 2022; 12 pm – 890 Caledonia Road, Toronto.**

“The number of cases requested by agencies each year for clean drinking water is staggering,” said Jody Steinhauer, founder of *Project Water*. One of the directors of an agency told us last year that it is the norm for a homeless person to walk 15 km every day in search of water. With very few public water fountains and many public washrooms closed, that search is becoming increasingly difficult. *Project Water* is just a band-aid to a growing epidemic of homelessness that needs to be addressed at the root to effectively provide the help and care that these members of our community so desperately need.”

A SIMPLE ACT OF KINDNESS

Project Water is an *Engage and Change* program committed to helping those less fortunate endure the hardships of summer by providing such necessities as: bottled water, a re-usable water bottle, sunscreen and sanitizer wipes. Since its inception in 2000, *Project Water* has placed in excess of 2 million bottles of water into the hands of Toronto and surrounding area homeless.

Water is the essence of all life and is an invaluable resource to those most vulnerable all year round,” said Steinhauer. “However, lack of clean drinking water among those less fortunate takes precedence in the warmer months when the risk of death by dehydration increases significantly due to excessive heat and humidity.” It takes a village to save a life. “We are grateful to our community partners in leading the charge in this ongoing endeavor to help save the lives of those living on our streets and in shelters and encourage all in the GTA community to rally for those whose life expectancy is at risk over something we all take for granted – shelter and clean drinking water.” **For more information or to make a donation, visit www.engageandchange.org.**

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