



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SUMMER WEATHER ADVISORY: EXCESSIVE HEAT AND DEATH TO GTA HOMELESS

TORONTO – June 14, 2024 – With summer just around the corner, the GTA is gearing up for warmer than normal temperatures with little rain in the forecast. While this is welcome news for winter weary residents who embrace the heat from air-conditioned dwellings with a cold one in hand, it is a sentence to death by dehydration for those experiencing homelessness.

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. For those in need, lifesaving water is a scarce commodity that remains a challenging resource for relief agencies and outreach programs that provide aid to those living in shelters, encampments and on our city streets. 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 will exceed the current average of 3 people per week.

In an insurmountable act of compassion, corporate partners BlueTriton Brands; Fortigo Freight Services, CIBC, Scotiabank, Perimeter Development Corporation and Toronto Police Services will distribute 6 tractor-trailer loads of water and 3,500 summer survival kits of essential items through the 25th Annual *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 19, 2024; 12 pm – 890 Caledonia Road, Toronto.**

“Giving back to our communities is foundational at BlueTriton Brands in Canada – it’s who we are,” said Scott McIntyre, President of BlueTriton Brands Canada. “This year perhaps more than ever, there is a life-sustaining need to get clean bottled water to the homeless. Donating water to the agencies who provide street outreach and shelter is the best way to ensure that those most vulnerable survive the heat this summer. We are proud of our long history working with Engage and Change on *Project Water*.”

IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO SAVE A LIFE

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, a ball cap, socks and hygiene items including sunscreen and sanitizer.

“The number of cases requested by agencies each year for clean drinking water is staggering,” said Jody Steinhauer, founder of *Project Water*. “It is not unusual for a homeless person to have to walk over 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. 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 – clean drinking water.”

Since its inception in 2000, *Project Water* has placed in excess of 2.5 million bottles of water into the hands of Toronto and surrounding area homeless. For more information or to make a donation, visit www.engageandchange.org.

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