



MEDIA ALERT

CLEAN WATER CRISIS IN THE GTA FUELS MORTALITY AMONG HOMELESS

TORONTO – JUNE 2021. These are precarious times. A global pandemic has taken lives, destroyed families and businesses, and has tested the will and faith of humankind. Those experiencing homelessness are five times more likely to die from COVID-19 than other demographics. Add to this a housing and opioid crisis, poor hygiene, and little to no access to clean drinking water, and the mortality rate among this high-risk group surpasses critical.

On average, a person living in a temperate climate requires 3 litres (13 cups) of fluid intake a day to maintain adequate hydration for proper bodily function. For those in need, life saving water is a scarce commodity that remains a challenging resource for relief agencies and outreach programs that provide aid to those living in shelters and on our city streets.

In an insurmountable act of compassion, corporate partners BlueTriton Brands; The Salvation Army; Fortigo Freight Services; Toronto Police Services; and The Bargains Group will distribute over 400,000 bottles of Pure Life Water 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 23, 2021; The Salvation Army, 150 Railside Road, North York, 12 pm PRESS CONFERENCE.**

COVID-19 LIMITS RELIEF EFFORTS

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, hat, toiletry and first aid items, etc. 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. Due to COVID-19 mandates, a variant effort to the Engage and Change initiative will allow for the distribution of Pure Life Water only to agencies that service our homeless via The Salvation Army.

Water is the essence of all life and is an invaluable resource to those most vulnerable all year round," said Jody Steinhauer, founder of *Project Water*. "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 endeavour 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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