



Community and Health Services Department
Public Health Branch

Memorandum

TO: Members of Committee of the Whole
FROM: Dr. Karim Kurji, Medical Officer of Health
DATE: May 5, 2016
RE: **2015 Minister's Award for Environmental Excellence**

The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change is recognizing the work of groups across the province for innovative efforts to protect the environment.

I am pleased to share that on April 20, 2016, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change announced Bernard Mayer, Safe Water Manager, as a recipient of the 2015 Minister's Award for Environmental Excellence.

Starting in 2006, Bernard Mayer and his team led a study project on weather and water conditions to predict beach advisories before water samples were analyzed. The project included extensive consultation with a number of partners such as environmental agencies, ministries and local Lake Simcoe shoreline communities. This work was also presented to the Community and Health Services Committee of Regional Council in 2012.

The study and project resulted in the creation of predictive models for public beaches along the Lake Simcoe shoreline with the goal of providing members of the public with more notice of an advisory or closure before arriving at a beach. This innovative initiative has resulted in the use of predictive models that have increased the probability of advisories being posted to the public on the actual day a beach is compromised.

This work has had far reaching impact beyond York Region and resulted in revisions to the Beach Management Guidance Document 2014 under the Ontario Public Health Standards. Bernard and his team have also presented at a number of conferences sharing this new knowledge and experience and empowering other health units to follow suit in the use of predictive models.

Dr. Karim Kurji, Medical Officer of Health

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