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Abstract (Summary)

Capital Regional District directors made the only responsible choice in asking chief medical health officer Dr. Richard Stanwick to investigate well-water quality in a Central Saanich neighbourhood.

While usually loathe to meddle in the affairs of member municipalities, the CRD directors have found the best possible solution. By appointing Stanwick, the development versus anti- development question is removed from the equation and the real concern -- public health -- becomes the focus.

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Full Text (323 words)

(Copyright Times Colonist (Victoria) 2001)

Capital Regional District directors made the only responsible choice in asking chief medical health officer Dr. Richard Stanwick to investigate well-water quality in a Central Saanich neighbourhood.

Some **Senanus** Road residents have complained for years that their well water is unfit to drink. They say it rots pipes, tanks and taps, and can even kill house plants. They want the municipality to solve the problem by hooking them up to CRD water.

Others in the neighbourhood disagree. They maintain testing processes have been flawed and worry that the supply of municipal water will pave the way to development in the area. The last time the issue went before Central Saanich council, it deadlocked -- and nothing was done.

While usually loathe to meddle in the affairs of member municipalities, the CRD directors have found the best possible solution. By appointing Stanwick, the development versus anti- development question is removed from the equation and the real concern -- public health -- becomes the focus.

And while the quality of private well water does not usually fall under the CRD's jurisdiction, both public health and municipal water do. And in this case, these wells are within reach of municipal water.

Stanwick will not be conducting new tests but instead will review existing data. He could come to a variety of conclusions: that the water is safe; that it is not; or even that there are gaps in the data and more testing has to be done.

If it is determined an alternative water source is necessary for public safety then the nuts and bolts of how to get it there -- be it to truck it, bottle it or pipe it

-- can be worked out later.

Stanwick has a proven record in speaking up on public health issues. His assessment will be thorough and his recommendations sound.

And given recent tragedies of Walkerton and North Battleford, concerns over water quality issues cannot be ignored.

Indexing (document details)

People: [Stanwick, Richard](#)

Document types: Editorial

Section: *Voices*

Publication title: [Times - Colonist](#). Victoria, B.C.: [May 26, 2001](#). pg. A.14

Source type: Newspaper

ProQuest document ID: 241177601

Text Word Count 323

Document URL: <http://proquest.umi.com.proxy.gvpl.ca/pqdweb?did=241177601&sid=1&Fmt=3&clientId=5176&RQT=309&VName=PQD>

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