

## 2016.06 THE RIGHT TO POTABLE WATER ON FIRST NATIONS RESERVES

**Whereas #1** according to the United Nations, “safe and clean drinking water” is a “human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights”; and

**Whereas #2** the Constitution Act mandates that the Federal Government provide “essential services of reasonable quality to all Canadians”; and

**Whereas #3** 100 percent of urban Canadian residents and 99 percent of rural Canadian residents have access to potable water, and the 1 percent of rural Canadian residents that lack access to potable water are predominantly Canadians living on reserves; and

**Whereas #4** there were 142 Drinking Water Advisories in effect in 96 First Nations communities across Canada, excluding British Columbia, as of August 31, 2015; therefore be it

**Resolved #1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that although all Canadians have a basic human right to potable water, the Government of Canada has treaty obligations to First Nations communities and an urgent and specific responsibility to secure access to potable water to the residents of all First Nations reserves; and be it further

**Resolved #2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to immediately allocate sufficient funding to provide access to potable water on all First Nations reserves within the next ten years; and be it further

**Resolved #3** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada in consultation with the communities, immediately develop five-year and ten-year plans of action to ensure that the allocated funds are utilized in an accountable manner to create sustainable solutions for accessible potable water including education and maintenance of systems by people in the communities.