



NESKANTAGA FIRST NATION

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE CHIEF AND COUNCIL

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## MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, November 3, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **ONTARIO'S INACTION ON WATER CRISIS PROMPTS NESKANTAGA FIRST NATION MEMBERS TO SIT-IN ONTARIO LEGISLATURE**

**TORONTO, ON:** Two members of Neskantaga First Nation (NFN) will sit in the Ontario Legislature today to protest the lack of action by the Ontario government on the water crisis the community is now facing and the inhumane lack of clean drinking water which has existed for over a quarter of a century. Amid fears of Covid-19, Lawrence Sakanee and Alex Moonias made the trip to Toronto to sit in on Ontario Legislature and call attention to the reality of the water crisis.

As guests of MPP Sol Mamakwa (Kiiwetinoong riding representative) the community members who have traveled to the Ontario Legislature are demanding better from Ontario. Better treatment for their children, grandchildren, families, and community. They are demanding a commitment from Ontario to assist Neskantaga First Nation in accessing the basic human right to clean water, while also addressing the mental health issues which stem from over 25 years of living with these conditions. The community is demanding a commitment from Ontario to contribute to a new distribution and sewer system so that water may flow to all community members.

Neskantaga First Nation Chief and Council have provided their full support to these members who are standing up for what is necessary for the health and wellbeing of their community.

Chief Christopher Moonias stated, "Our people are tired and frustrated. We have been denied access to clean water for far too long. There are no acceptable excuses for this at any level of government. We fully support our members who have traveled to the Ontario Legislature to hold the Provincial Government responsible for their part in what our community is facing."

Since October 19, 2020 community members have been evacuated from their homes after an oily sheen was found in the water reservoir which prompted a complete water shut down and public health emergency. Further, the "new" water treatment plant, which has been in progress for years, has not been commissioned yet and the water supply system and related infrastructure are in need of replacement. With so many leaks in the distribution pipes the system cannot keep the water reservoir at a manageable level. Community members often go without water or pressure in the lines. This is in addition to the over 25-years of Boil Water Advisory.

The community requires all levels of government, both Federal and Provincial, to respond and work together to fix our water.

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*For more information, please contact: Councillor Allan Moonias [allanmoonias@gmail.com](mailto:allanmoonias@gmail.com)*

*Neskantaga First Nation is remote Oji-Cree community situated in Northern Ontario on Attawapiskat Lake, 430 kms north east of Thunder Bay, Ontario.*