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## Media Advisory

*For Immediate Release*

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### **Portland Water Bureau Obtains Water Treatment Variance**

Portland, OR – The Oregon Health Authority Drinking Water Program (OHA) today issued a final order granting the Portland Water Bureau’s request for a variance to the treatment requirements of the federal Long Term 2 Enhanced Surface Water Treatment Rule (LT2). The variance – the first of its kind ever granted under the Safe Drinking Water Act – allows Portland to avoid constructing a treatment facility to address the microorganism *Cryptosporidium* for the City’s Bull Run source and saves Portland ratepayers roughly \$70 million in capital expenses.

“We are incredibly pleased and proud to be the first water system ever to achieve this type of variance,” said Randy Leonard, Commissioner-in-Charge of the Portland Water Bureau. “This marks a truly historic milestone in the long, rich history of Portland’s drinking water system.”

“It’s been four years in the making and our staff has worked very hard to develop a scientifically sound basis to support the City’s request,” added Water Bureau Administrator, David Shaff. “The decision by OHA validates the exceptional quality of the Bull Run source and the source water protection efforts of Portland and its federal land management partners.”

The final order issued by OHA indicates that the variance will go into effect on April 1, 2012 and will be in effect for 10 years if Portland is able to continue to meet a list of conditions described by OHA in the document.

The conditions include:

- Extensive ongoing monitoring for *Cryptosporidium* in the Bull Run source while demonstrating an exceptionally low concentration of the contaminant;
- Maintaining all existing watershed protection policies and practices; and
- Regular reporting to OHA regarding monitoring results and the status of the watershed.

The Final Order also includes new requirements for tributary monitoring in the watershed and wildlife scat collection. Public notification requirements are also more stringent and include notifications to the media in the event of any detections of *Cryptosporidium* at the water system intake.

Portland intends to develop monitoring programs to meet these required conditions while also developing additional research to help maintain the variance and protect public health. These additional efforts include wildlife research to better understand the only potentially significant source of *Cryptosporidium* in the watershed. Portland will also explore developing partnerships with local health agencies to monitor the Portland drinking water service area for cryptosporidiosis, the sickness caused by *Cryptosporidium*.

The Final Order granting the variance and additional background on Portland's LT2 compliance efforts can be accessed online at [www.portlandonline.com/water/lt2](http://www.portlandonline.com/water/lt2).

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