University of Victoria

Media Release

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DON'T DRINK THE WATER

New UVic documentary explores the lack of safe water on First Nations reserves

Imagine living life without access to clean and safe drinking water. Imagine not being able to brush your teeth, wash your food, do your dishes, bathe your children, wash your clothes or use water for any activity which keeps you clean and healthy, unless you do so from a bottle.

In Canada, this is the reality for one in six First Nations reserves that are under a boiled water advisory. In fact, the majority of the advisories have been in place for many years. The 282 residents of the Neskantanga First Nation in Ontario, for example, have been living under a boiled water advisory since 1995. The health implications of this are huge; it is no coincidence that the incidence of contagious disease is higher in these communities.

The documentary *Crisis on Tap: First Nations Water for Life* takes a hard look at some of these issues and searches for solutions, which may be more far reaching than we realize.

The film is produced by the University of Victoria's Centre for Aboriginal Health Research (CAHR) and the Victoria-based Cedarwood Productions.

"We hope that *Crisis on Tap* will show Canadians that this problem still exists. When it comes to water what's happening on First Nations reserves isn't that different from what's happening in Third World countries," says Robynne Edgar, the film's co-producer and CAHR's program manager. *Crisis on Tap: First Nations Water for Life* is the result of UVic's March 2010 international conference where researchers, First Nation leaders, and practitioners explored ways to improve the quality of water available in Aboriginal communities across Canada.

The documentary will be shown for the first time on Tues., April 26, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. at UVic's Centre for Aboriginal Health Research Office, Saunders Annex, Room 130C at University of Victoria. The public is invited to attend this free event.

The trailer for *Crisis on Tap: First Nations Water for Life* can be viewed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08L4Rtrt8hk

Media advisory: A DVD of *Crisis on Tap: First Nations Water for Life* is available by calling Karen Davies at Cedarwood Productions, 250-544-1313, or Karen@cedarwoodproductions.ca

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