

Winter 2008

DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION

ACT FOR CLEAN WATER

South Georgian Bay
Lake Simcoe
Source Protection
Region

Understanding Source Water Protection: The Role of the Source Protection Committee

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In 2006, the province passed the Clean Water Act — legislation designed to provide a new level of protection for our drinking water sources.

The act establishes a locally driven, science-based, multi-stakeholder process to protect drinking water sources and promote the notion of stewardship — the shared responsibility of all stakeholders to protect the integrity of local sources of municipal residential drinking water.

To oversee this process, the Ontario government created Source Protection Committees, composed of diverse stakeholders that will work together to agree on the best approach for protecting water resources in the watershed through a source water protection plan.

A source water protection plan is an agreement among the people and the municipalities of a watershed about the ways to protect water quality and quantity for municipal drinking water systems. The plan will detail land use and the impact of those activities/practices on our local drinking water quality. The process of developing source protection plans will be open and transparent.



In August 2007, the Minister of Environment announced the appointment of Lynn Dollin as Chair of the Source Protection Committee. Lynn's experience is broad and well suited to the task at hand. She owns and operates a small business in Cookstown and has served her community as a Councillor for the Town of Innisfil for over 10 years. She's held a variety of board positions, having served on the Board of Directors for both the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority

and Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority. These experiences prepare her for the important role of chairing a committee of diverse stakeholders.

The Source Protection Committee will be responsible for overseeing the identification of significant water resource areas, examining the risks to the quality or quantity of drinking water, and developing policies and strategies to minimize those risks. This is no small feat given our source protection region covers more than 10,000 square kilometers with a population of over 700,000 people in 52 municipalities. It will take strong leadership, the ability to gain consensus and the need to make communication a priority.

Meet the Source Protection Committee



John Boucher, Severn Sound watershed, Municipal member



Clayton Cameron, Black River watershed, Municipal member



Brian Milligan, Severn Sound watershed, Municipal member



David Marquis, Lake Simcoe watershed, Municipal member



Stan Wells, Nottawasaga Valley watershed, Municipal member



Rick Newlove, Nottawasaga Valley watershed, Municipal member



Ilmar Simanovskis, Lake Simcoe watershed, Municipal member



Colin Elliott, Agriculture



Robert Grimm, Aggregate Producers



John Hemsted, Agriculture



Colin Nisbet, Golf Industry



David Ritchie, Agriculture



Gerry Brouwer, Industrial/commercial sector



David Ketcheson, Industrial/commercial sector



Dianne Corrigan, Town of Newmarket, Public at large



Bob Duncanson, Dufferin County, Public at large



Stephanie Hobbs, Town of Midland, Environment



Tom Kurtz, Horseshoe Valley, Public at large



Alex Millar, City of Orillia, Public at large



Fred Ruf, Victoria Harbour, Health



Larry Slomka, Town of Innisfil, Health

Did You Know...

Source Protection Committee meetings are open to the public.

The schedule is posted on our website:

www.ourwatershed.ca

Acronyms:

CWA: Clean Water Act

IPZ: intake protection zone

LSRCA: Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority

NVCA: Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority

SPA: Source Protection Authority

SPC: Source Protection Committee

SPP: Source Protection Plan

SSEA: Severn Sound Environmental Association

SWP: source water protection

WHPA: wellhead protection area

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◆ Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority ◆ Severn Sound Environmental Association ◆
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The Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program Launches!

The Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program is underway and aims to help provide a multi-barrier approach to drinking water protection. Since 90 percent of land in Southern Ontario is privately owned, and activities on lands adjacent to town wells can impact on everyone's drinking water, individual citizens are going to be a big part of the solution! Together we can help to protect Ontario's drinking water.

The province is providing \$2 million to agencies that plan on being involved in source water protection outreach and education programs in 2007-08.

The Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and Severn Sound Environmental Association, collectively as the South Georgian Bay-Lake Simcoe Source Protection Region, will be partners delivering the education and outreach program to individuals living in areas that are most vulnerable to contaminating municipal sources of drinking water.

What this means for residents and businesses

Starting in January 2008, a communications campaign began, targeted at individuals and businesses living within 100 meters of a municipal wellhead and 200 meters of a municipal surface water intake. The goal of this outreach is to let landowners know about their location on sensitive land and how their actions can impact the quality of drinking water.

We are helping to empower the public to take action on their own properties by providing sound science-based information, technical advice and financial assistance. Those within the critical protection zones are eligible for a free site visit. We will also be hosting a number of workshops throughout the watersheds, talking about practical things we can do to protect our water. Eligible landowners can access grants for:

Well Decommissioning and Upgrading	Pollution Prevention Reviews	Septic System Inspections and Upgrades	Runoff and Erosion Protection
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Poorly constructed wells can allow contamination on the ground surface to quickly reach otherwise protected groundwater supplies. Properly decommissioning unused water wells or upgrading wells that are still in use but in poor condition helps minimize the potential for groundwater contamination through the wells.

Pollution prevention reviews look for ways that small and medium sized businesses can avoid or minimize pollution and waste and reduce potential threats to sources of drinking water and human health. They do this by looking at and analyzing the entire business, from production, to raw materials, to inventory control.

The septic program will provide funding for the repair, upgrade, or replacement of faulty or malfunctioning septic systems.

The purpose of the runoff and erosion protection program is to protect municipal drinking water sources from runoff contamination and soil erosion through properly constructing and restoring buffer strips and riparian zones.

For the above programs, funding will be made available to landowners whose properties are located within or extend into the 100 meter radius of a municipal wellhead or the 200 meter radius of a municipal surface water intake.

If you have any questions, please contact your local Source Protection Authority (SPA):

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Clean Water Act Timelines

2006 to 2008: Laying the Foundation

- ⇒ Province passes Clean Water Act legislation and first phase of regulations.
- ⇒ Province establishes Source Protection Authorities. The geographic area of each Source Protection Authority covers a watershed. These watershed areas are grouped to form 11 Source Protection Regions and 8 stand-alone Source Protection Areas.
- ⇒ Each Source Protection Region/Area establishes a Source Protection Committee by forwarding their Chair nominations to the Province for selection and recruiting other Source Protection Committee members by sector.
- ⇒ Each Source Protection Committee drives the development of a Terms of Reference. The Terms of Reference lays out who will be responsible for what part of the Source Protection Plan and how the work will be conducted.

2008 to 2009: Assessment of Risks

- ⇒ The Source Protection Committee, including municipalities, Source Protection Authorities and other key stakeholders, identifies and assesses threats to local drinking water sources.
- ⇒ The Source Protection Committee prepares the Assessment Report and consults with the public for feedback. The Province provides final approval.

2009 to 2012: Source Protection Planning

- ⇒ The Source Protection Committee prepares the Source Protection Plan, including policies to address threats to drinking water. Broad consultation with the public on the Source Protection Plan provides feedback to the Source Protection Committee.

2013 onwards: Implementation

- ⇒ Municipalities and other stakeholders implement the Source Protection Plan.
- ⇒ Inspection and enforcement of local measures against drinking water threats.
- ⇒ Source Protection Authority monitors Source Protection Plan and provides the Province with annual reports.
- ⇒ Source Protection Committee reviews and comments on annual report.

The Clean Water Act

The Clean Water Act received Royal Assent on October 19, 2006. On July 3, 2007, the Act and five regulations came into effect. The intent of the legislation is to ensure communities are able to protect their municipal drinking water supplies through developing collaborative, locally driven, science-based protection plans. Communities will identify potential risks to local drinking water sources and take action to reduce or eliminate these risks. Municipalities, conservation authorities, property owners, farmers, industry, community groups and the public will all work together to meet common goals.

Did you know...



74% of Canadians get their water from surface water.

Do you know where you get yours?

Learn more about your drinking water at the following free community meetings:

January 28, 2008 - Newmarket
6:30 - 9 pm Ray Twinney Complex, 100 Eagle St. W.

February 13, 2008 - Barrie
6:30 - 9 pm Barrie City Hall, 70 Collier St.

February 19, 2008 - Orillia
6:30 - 9 pm Orillia Museum, 30 Peter St. S.

February 26, 2008 - Utopia
7 to 10 pm Tiffin Centre - John L. Jose building

March 5, 2008 - Bradford
6:30 - 9 pm Bradford Library, 100 Holland Court

March 19, 2008 - Schomberg
6:30 - 9 pm Schomberg Library, 77 Main St.

March 26, 2008 - Sharon
6:30 - 9 pm East Gwillimbury Municipal Office, 19000 Leslie St.

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SOURCE WATER PROTECTION

South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Region

Our region, as outlined below in blue, is comprised of four watersheds (Lake Simcoe, Nottawasaga Valley, Severn Sound and Black-Severn) and three Source Protection Authorities (Lakes Simcoe and Couchiching/Black River SPA, Nottawasaga Valley SPA and Severn Sound SPA).



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What is a Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA)?

A wellhead protection area is the area around a municipal wellhead where land use activities have the potential to affect the quality of water that flows into the well. It's the surface and underground area surrounding a water well or wellfield that supplies the water well or wellfield.

What is an Intake Protection Zone (IPZ)?

An intake protection zone is the area of land and water immediately surrounding a water intake in a lake, river, or stream. Along with a wellhead protection area, it is one of four areas in need of protection under a source protection plan that must be identified in the assessment report.

Why protect WHPAs and IPZs?

These areas need to be protected as they are the most likely areas to contribute to the contamination of a drinking water supply if they are not managed properly.

Our Source Protection Committee will be developing plans to protect municipal sources of water. These source protection plans will benefit our communities in a pro-active approach which will impact our lives and reduce costs to municipalities to maintain good water supplies by:

- ⇒ Not having to find new drinking water sources when old ones become contaminated
- ⇒ Avoiding the need and significant costs associated with cleaning up contaminated water
- ⇒ Ensuring a long-term supply of clean water
- ⇒ Ensuring a positive climate for economic growth

Did you know...

A **watershed** is an area of land that is drained by a river and its tributaries into a particular body of water such as a pond, lake or ocean. Think about your local creek, river or stream. Where does it start? What types of landscapes does it pass through and where does it end up? All of the area covered is a watershed.



What you can do to protect water quality & quantity

- ⇒ Conserve water — use a rain barrel, repair leaks indoors and out, consider low flow toilets and shower heads, plant native vegetation that requires less water.
- ⇒ Be an avid recycler — recycling cuts down on pollution and reduces water use in manufacturing.
- ⇒ Businesses and homeowners should dispose of hazardous waste properly. Contact your local municipal government about your options for proper disposal.
- ⇒ Use non-toxic products for cleaning and environmentally friendly soaps, shampoos, and personal care products. Remember that what goes down your drain has the potential to impact the water we all share.
- ⇒ Clean up pet waste which contains nutrients and pathogens that enter storm drains during rain events.
- ⇒ Keep your septic system in good working order and empty the tank regularly.
- ⇒ Protect and maintain your private well — be sure it is properly sealed, test your well three times per year, and contact Well Aware at www.wellaware.ca to book a guided self assessment to learn how to maintain your private well.
- ⇒ Get involved in your local source protection process by contacting the Source Protection Authority in your watershed to learn more about what you can do to protect water quality and quantity.

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