

Assessing Our Water Sources



What are *Assessment Reports*?

They are technical documents which describe the local watershed, assess available water supply, map vulnerable areas and determine if there are threats in these vulnerable areas that are risks to our drinking water. A multi-stakeholder Source Protection Committee, with representation from the public sector, farming, business, municipalities and first nations drafted the Assessment Reports for the three areas within the South Georgian Bay-Lake Simcoe Region.

What are *vulnerable areas*?

There are four types of vulnerable areas:

- 1. Wellhead Protection Areas**
(areas where groundwater travels to a municipal well)
- 2. Intake Protection Zones**
(areas around surface water intakes where we get our water)
- 3. Highly Vulnerable Aquifers**
(where the underground water source is more susceptible to contamination)
- 4. Significant Drinking Water Recharge Areas**
(where a large proportion of water gets absorbed back into aquifers)



What are *drinking water threats*?

There are 21 different types of threats to drinking water under the *Clean Water Act*. They include:

- Waste disposal sites
- Sewage systems (including septic)
- Agricultural and non-agricultural source material applied to land, stored, handled or managed
- Commercial fertilizer applied, handled or stored
- Pesticides applied to land, handled or stored
- Road salt applied, handled or stored
- Snow stored
- Fuel handled or stored
- Activities taking water from an aquifer (groundwater) or surface water body (lake or river)
- Activities reducing recharge of an aquifer's underground water sources (e.g., pavement)
- Livestock grazing, pasturing, outdoor confinement areas and farm-animal yards
- Organic solvents handled or stored
- The handling and storage of a dense non-aqueous phase liquid (DNAPL) (e.g., oil & solvents)
- Chemicals used in the de-icing of aircraft

How will *this affect me*?

Landowners who own property in a vulnerable area and are currently engaged, have been, or could become engaged in activities like the ones listed above may have their activities or property conditions identified as a significant threat to a municipal drinking water source. Source Protection Plans are being developed which will have implications for those landowners on whose property activities or conditions have been identified as a risk to municipal drinking water. The *Clean Water Act* mandates that all these significant threat activities and conditions must be mitigated. We invite you to join the Source Protection Process at www.ourwatershed.ca.