

Ministry reviewing source protection plans

Source protection plans for the four watersheds in the Lake Erie region were submitted to the Ministry of the Environment in late 2012 and early 2013.

Now, the plans are under review by the ministry to see if they fulfill the requirements of the Clean Water Act.

The review process can take some time, particularly for large and complex plans such as those for the Grand River and Long Point Region.

As the province reviews the four plans, it may make suggestions on ways to change them to ensure they conform to the Act and its regulations.

If the province proposes substantial changes, a public information or consultation process may take place in 2014.

A total of 38 source protection plans were produced across Ontario. So far, just the plan for the Thunder Bay area has been approved.

The ministry anticipates that it could take until the end of 2015 before all of the plans are approved.

Updates underway

Although the four Lake Erie Region Source Protection Plans have been submitted for approval, work is taking place to update elements of some of the plans.

In the Grand River watershed, studies are continuing to determine if there are areas where policies are required to protect the amount of water available for municipal supplies.

Also in the Grand River watershed, technical studies are taking place to bring a mothballed river intake at Dunnville under the plan. Previously, the river intake was excluded from the process, but the County of Haldimand has decided it would like the plan extended to include the river intake as an emergency backup to the Lake Erie intake that currently supplies Dunnville.

In Long Point Region, analysis is being done of two wells serving Tillsonburg to determine the size of an Issue Contributing Area for the wells.

When the work is complete, there will be a public consultation period to inform landowners who may be affected, giving them an opportunity to comment.

Workshops help prepare for implementation

Conservation authorities, municipalities and other agencies are taking steps to be ready to implement source protection plans once they are approved.

The Lake Erie Region source protection staff organized a workshop held June 21 to provide municipal officials with information on some elements of the Clean Water Act.

Specifically, the workshop looked at the "Part IV" tools, named after the section of the Act. The tools include Risk Management Plans and the prohibition of specific activities that can negatively affect drinking water sources.

About 35 people participated, including municipal and conservation authority staff.

A second workshop for municipal officials on the Part IV tools will be held at the GRCA head office in Cambridge on Dec. 9.

The workshops are an initiative of the Municipal Implementation Working Group which provides a forum for information sharing, collaboration and development of resources.

The group meets monthly to help municipalities prepare for implementation.

Municipalities will have a significant role in implementing source protection plans and reporting on their actions to the Source Protection Authority in their watershed.

New member for Source Protection Committee

The responsibility for overseeing the development of Source Protection Plans rests with the Lake Erie Region Source Protection Committee.

The 25 members of the committee represent a cross section of those with a stake in water issues: municipalities, farmers, industries, residents and First Nations.

Recently, the City of Guelph named Peter Rider to be its representative on the committee.

He is the Risk Management Official for Guelph. He replaces Peter Busatto, Guelph's General Manager of Water Services.

Is your property affected?

There are hundreds of municipal wells and many surface water intakes in the four watersheds of the Lake Erie Region.

Each one of them is surrounded by a Wellhead Protection Area or an Intake

Protection Zones.

These protection areas include many residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural properties.

If you would like to know if your property is within one of these zones:

- in the Grand River watershed, check out the interactive maps at www.sourcewater.ca. Look under *Watersheds/Grand River/Map Your Property* for details.
- in the Long Point Region, Cattfish Creek and Kettle Creek watersheds, contact Craig Jacques, Source Water Protection Technician at Long Point Region Conservation Authority: cjacques@lprca.on.ca or 888-231-5408

Want to know more?

The implementation of source protection plans could have an impact on landowners, farmers, industries, commercial operations and other groups.

Source protection staff are available to provide information to groups and organizations.

To discuss your needs and opportunities to share information, please contact:

- Martin Keller
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About this newsletter

This is an update of activities taking place to develop Drinking Water Source Protection Plans in the Lake Erie Source Protection Region.

The Lake Erie Region is composed of four watershed areas: Grand River, Long Point Region, Cattfish Creek and Kettle Creek.

For more information on the Act, drinking water source protection and the Lake Erie Region, go to:

www.sourcewater.ca

The newsletter is prepared by the communications staff of the Lake Erie Region. Contact information is available on our website, or you can reach us by sending an e-mail to: info@sourcewater.ca