

Local committee completing draft proposed plans to protect region's municipal drinking water sources

You are invited to attend meetings, comment on draft proposed plans

A local committee is preparing planning policies to protect municipal drinking water sources in its region.

The Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Drinking Water Source Protection Committee (SPC) will be releasing drafts of proposed source protection plans shortly.

"The source protection committee has been working hard for five years to set terms of reference, complete threats assessment, and to create practical and effective plans to protect drinking water sources," said Larry Brown, SPC Chair. "We look forward to your comments on the draft policies to ensure the policies are realistic and will protect your water."

The 15-member committee has made plans to publish a formal public notice in several newspapers, and on the www.sourcewaterinfo.on.ca website, before the end of May, 2012.

The committee has also scheduled several



Larry Brown
Chairman,
Ausable Bayfield
Maitland Valley
Drinking Water Source
Protection Committee

public meeting opportunities in June 2012 for the public to inspect and review the drafts, ask questions, and provide written comments.

There will be one plan for the Maitland Valley source protection area and one plan for the Ausable Bayfield source protection area.

The plans, when approved, will protect community water supplies. It will do this through policies that take effect in wellhead protection areas around municipal wells.

The committee can use tools such as prohibition of some new land uses in the most vulnerable areas or management plans for some existing land uses there.

Drinking water source protection planning is taking place across Ontario. This has been made possible by the *Clean Water Act, 2006*.

More than 90 per cent of people in the region will not be directly impacted by planning policies with legal effect. Those people who live, or own property, in certain



Community members from municipalities, industry, commerce, agriculture, property-owner associations, the environmental sector, and the public-at-large, have been working on a 15-member committee since 2007 on three phases of source protection planning: terms of reference, threats assessment, and now source protection plans.

vulnerable areas near municipal wells may have to follow policies such as risk management plans to reduce threats to drinking water. More information can be found at sourcewaterinfo.on.ca or by calling the office at numbers listed in this publication.

What is a source protection plan?

A source protection plan creates policies to protect your community's drinking water sources, such as municipal wells and intakes, from contamination or depletion.

These policies will help prevent pathogens (such as *E. coli* bacteria) or chemicals (including organic solvents) from contaminating your community's water.

The plans will manage or prohibit certain activities in the most vulnerable areas. The plans are designed to prevent new significant threats from being created, or ensure threats are no longer significant.

The policies with legal effect, such as prohibition of some new land-use activities or management of existing land-use activities, will apply only in the most vulnerable areas with the greatest potential to impact municipal wells. The plans will take effect by 2013.



WHAT'S INSIDE...

Page One

- Draft proposed plans to be released
- What is a source protection plan?

Page Two

- Why are source protection plans needed?
- Is there funding available to help?

Page Three

- Meet the source protection committee
- Public meetings you can attend
- What tools can be used to protect water?

Page Four

- Where are policies focused?
- How could policies impact landowners?
- How to contact us

Why are drinking water source protection plans needed?

Several barriers of protection required to keep your water safe from contamination

Water safety increases with Three Ts (treatment, testing, and training), monitoring, distribution, and – now – drinking water source protection

Why is drinking water source protection needed in this region?

Research in Canada and the United States has found that preventing contamination is much less expensive than cleaning up afterward.

Prevention efforts can help keep pathogens (such as E. coli bacteria) and chemicals out of raw water. That reduces risk for you, your family, and your community.

We have had several Canadian and international experiences of contamination resulting in long-term illness or even death. The disaster at Walkerton, Ontario is one powerful example.

In May 2000, water contaminated by *E. coli* bacteria made its way into the municipal water system of the town of Walkerton. Within days, seven people had died and thousands of others had become ill from drinking the contaminated water. The provincial government convened an inquiry, which was led by Justice Dennis O'Connor of the Supreme Court of Ontario. In 2002, Justice O'Connor released two reports.

Justice O'Connor called for a multiple-barrier water management approach to prevent a similar tragedy from occurring again. He concluded that source protection is one of the most effective and efficient means of protecting the safety of Ontario's drinking water. He also made 22 recommendations, including the need to develop legislation that would require source protection plans to be developed and implemented locally for every watershed in Ontario. This resulted in Ontario's *Clean Water Act, 2006*. This legislation created the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program which has been providing financial assistance to property owners near municipal wells for their projects that protect water. The law also created source protection committees and source protection planning. The Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Source Protection Committee will be releasing drafts of their proposed plans for public inspection, questions, and written comments. For more information visit www.sourcewaterinfo.on.ca or call us.



Is there funding to help property owners do projects near municipal wells?

Property owners located closest to municipal wells and intakes can help protect drinking water sources through voluntary stewardship projects. The Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program provides financial incentives for property owners in some of the most vulnerable areas near municipal wells.

If you are the owner of a home, farm, business or other property in the region within 100 metres of a municipal well, or one kilometre of a surface water intake, or if your property is located within a two-year time-of-travel of a municipal well, you may be eligible for funding for:

- Decommissioning abandoned wells
- Maintenance of existing wells

- Septic system upgrades
- Runoff and erosion protection
- Best management practices
- Chemical storage, containment
- Manure storage
- Fuel storage and containment (includes furnace oil tanks)

Funding may be available for a limited time only so act now. (Landowners in five-year time-of-travel may be eligible for chemical containment projects).

Visit sourceprotectionstewardship.on.ca or e-mail stewardship@sourcewaterinfo.on.ca or phone Maitland Valley Conservation Authority at **519-335-3557** or the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority at **519-235-2610** or **1-888-286-2610**.



Landowner Bill Scott is shown with sign *We Are Helping to Protect Drinking Water* at his property near Seaforth. He is one of the property owners protecting drinking water sources through upgrades near municipal wells. With him is Donna Clarkson, Source Protection Technician. The Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program is providing financial incentives for property owners in vulnerable areas to prevent significant threats to water.



Meet Your Committee

Members of the local Source Protection Committee (SPC) have been working since 2007 on planning to protect municipal drinking water at the source. The committee is preparing to release drafts of proposed source protection plans to protect drinking water in the Maitland Valley and Ausable Bayfield source protection areas. The current SPC for the region is (front row, left to right) Meredith Schneider, Municipal (eastern part of the region); Karen Galbraith, Public-at-Large (Maitland Valley); Gib Dow, Economic Sector – Commerce; Laurence (Larry) Brown, Chair; Al Hamilton, Economic Sector – Industry; Don Jones, Municipal (western part of region); Jim Ginn, Liaison, Source Protection Authorities (Maitland Valley and Ausable Bayfield); (back row) Bob Worsell, Liaison, Health; David Blaney, Municipal (central part of region); Mike McElhone, Landowner/Property Associations; John Vander Burgt, Economic Sector – Agriculture; Matt Pearson, Environment; Keith Black, Economic Sector – Agriculture; Bill Rowat, Environment; Marilyn Miltenburg, Municipal (northern part of region); and Ian Brebner, Municipal (southern part of region). Not in photo is Gerry Rupke, Public-at-Large (Ausable Bayfield), and Rowena Wallace, Economic Sector – Agriculture. The SPC is offering several public meetings in June for people to inspect drafts of proposed source protection plans (pending), ask questions, and provide written comments.

How can SPC protect water sources?

The Source Protection Committee is preparing source protection plans to prevent significant threats to municipal drinking water sources. The committee has several tools it can use under the Ontario *Clean Water Act, 2006*. It has Part IV tools under this law to manage or prohibit threats in three very vulnerable areas near municipal wells. These more regulatory tools do not apply in more than 90 per cent of properties in the region.

Draft plans will outline what existing threats in those areas, in certain quantities or circumstances, need to be



managed and what new activities will be prohibited from starting in the most vulnerable areas.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Source Protection Committee is nearing completion of drafts of proposed source protection plans. At press time, the committee expects to be able to issue formal public notice this month (May 2012). The committee has scheduled several public meeting opportunities in June, 2012 so the public will be able to inspect and review the draft plans, ask questions, and provide written comments.

Public Meetings 2012:

Public Meeting – Make a Presentation

Wednesday, **June 13**, 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m.,
White Carnation Banquet Hall,
79867 Parr Line, Holmesville

* If you would like to present as a delegation to June 13 public meeting please phone or e-mail in advance, to Jenna Allain at jallain@abca.on.ca, to schedule a presentation time

Public Meeting – Open House Format

Friday, **June 15**, 2 p.m. – 4 p.m.
Zurich Arena and Community Centre
15 East Street, Zurich

Public Online Meeting

Saturday, **June 16**, 10 a.m. - 11 a.m.
Teleconference plus web conference.
Visit sourcewaterinfo.on.ca for phone and/or
Internet log-in information

Public Meeting – Open House Format

Tuesday, **June 19**, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.,
North Huron Westcast Community Complex, Hot
Stove Lounge, 99 Kerr Drive, Wingham

Copies of the Draft Proposed Source Protection Plans will be available, upon posting of the notice, at www.sourcewaterinfo.on.ca or, during regular business hours, at:

- Maitland Valley Source Protection Authority,
1093 Marietta Street, Wroxeter
- Ausable Bayfield Source Protection Authority,
71108 Morrison Line, RR 3 Exeter

Policies make vulnerable areas near municipal wells top priority

Planning policies to protect your community's water supplies will concentrate on the areas where municipal wells are most vulnerable to contamination. The **three most vulnerable areas**, where activities could pose significant threats to drinking water in this region, are:

- 1) 100-metre zone (Wellhead Protection Area A)
- 2) Two-year time-of-travel zone (Wellhead Protection Area B)
- 3) Five-year time-of-travel zone (Wellhead Protection Area C)

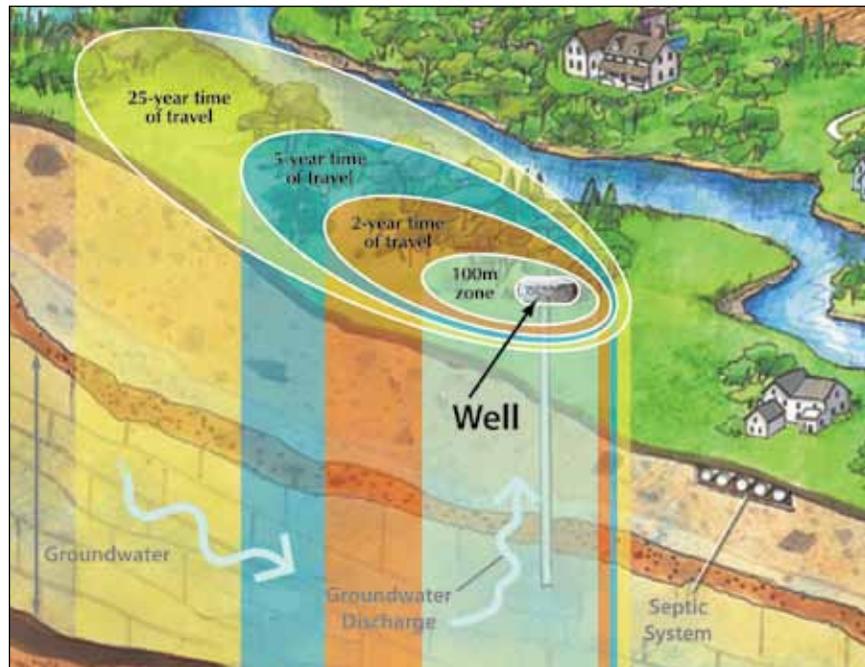
The source protection committee can only apply binding policies (those policies with legal effect) in those three areas. The region has sent letters to inform property owners if a potential significant drinking water threat activity could be present on their property. Property owners may want to check assessment report maps to see if they are located in Area A, B, or C or contact the Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Drinking Water Source Protection Region at the numbers in this publication.

The Province of Ontario approved assessment reports for the Maitland Valley and Ausable Bayfield areas on January 9, 2012. The reports show intake protection zones and wellhead protection areas. For copies of maps and information visit: www.sourcewaterinfo.on.ca

List of 21 threat activities, Provincial Tables of Circumstances

A list of 21 activities that can be a significant threat to drinking water, in certain areas, is found at: http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/html/reg/english/elaws_regs_070287_e.htm#s1p1s1

The quantities or circumstances that can make an activity a threat in a vulnerable area are at: http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/legislation/clean_water_act/STDPROD_081301.html



Activities on the surface could contaminate water underground if not properly managed. That groundwater is where many municipalities in the region get drinking water. That's why the Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Source Protection Committee is concentrating on the areas where municipal water is most vulnerable.

How might source protection plans impact property owners?

Drafts of Proposed Source Protection Plans (pending, May 2012) will create policies for certain land-use activities, in certain circumstances or quantities, in the three most vulnerable areas near municipal wells. Those areas are wellhead protection areas A, B, and C.

More than 90 per cent of people in the region do not have potential significant drinking water threat activities on their property. For property owners in the most vulnerable areas here are some changes they may need to make:

- Houses within 100 metres of a municipal wellhead, or in the most vulnerable parts of the two-year time-of-travel area, that rely on septic systems, and/or oil heat, will need to implement best practices. They may need to hook up to an existing sewage line, where available, to reduce risk to drinking water.
- New instances of home heating oil in the most vulnerable areas would be prohibited,

and for existing houses with below-grade home heating oil, a risk management plan may be required. Landowners will take part in required education programs in the case of vulnerable-area septic systems and home heating oil.

- Existing businesses and institutions storing certain types and quantities of chemicals, commercial fertilizer, or fuel, would have to implement measures that would reduce the risk of contamination. They will work with a Risk Management Official on a Risk Management Plan.

- New businesses that use certain types or quantities of chemicals, retail outlets storing large amounts of pesticide or commercial fertilizer, and facilities storing large amounts of fuel (such as gas stations), would not be permitted to be established in the most vulnerable areas if they are not there already.

- Targeted information or training

opportunities would be provided to landowners in close proximity to the municipal wellhead to discuss best practices for activities which can threaten water quality, such as fuel storage and handling, sewage and septic tanks, snow removal, storage, and salt application, pesticides, fertilizers, and organic solvents.

These are some of the committee's planning policy ideas that will be part of Drafts of Proposed Source Protection Plans. The source protection committee expects to provide formal notice in May to let the public know when the drafts are available for public inspection, questions, and written comments.

Public meeting opportunities in June are listed in this publication. Contact information for your source protection region is located below. We welcome your questions and written comments on policies to protect your municipal drinking water sources.

For more information on drinking water source protection planning in the region:



Ausable Bayfield
Maitland Valley
Source Protection
Region

Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Drinking Water Source Protection Region

c/o ABCA, 71108 Morrison Line, RR 3 Exeter, ON N0M 1S5 • 1-888-286-2610

www.sourcewaterinfo.on.ca • www.sourceprotectionstewardship.on.ca

Maitland Valley: 519-335-3557 • **Ausable Bayfield:** 519-235-2610

This project has received funding support from the Province of Ontario. Such support does not indicate endorsement by the Ministry of the contents of this material. This publication has been created for local information purposes and may be subject to change.