

DRINKING WATER SOURCE PROTECTION

ACT FOR CLEAN WATER



Source Protection Report

By Janet Stavinga, Chair

Grant dollars are now available under the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program for properties located near municipal drinking water systems! Visit our web site or your local Conservation Authority office to see maps showing the 12 eligible areas in Almonte, Britannia, Carleton Place, Carp, Kemptville, Lemieux Island, Merrickville, Munster, Perth, Richmond, Smiths Falls and Westport. Grants are available for: **wells** (decommissioning, upgrading and connecting to municipal water line); **septic systems** (repairing, upgrading/replacing, connecting to municipal sewer line); land stewardship (runoff/erosion prevention and agricultural best management practices); and **businesses** (environmental review of a business's practices). The deadline to apply is December 31, 2010. Retroactive applications for work completed after September 19, 2006 are also eligible for funding. Farmers can apply through their local Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association, visit www.ontariosoilandcrop.org or call 1-800-265-9751 for details. Everyone else should apply through the Landowner Resource Centre. Visit www.mrsourcewater.ca or call 613-692-3571 or 1-800-267-3504 ext. 1128 or 1132 for all the details. The Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program was created by the *Clean Water Act* to provide financial assistance to land owners, farmers and businesses helping to protect sources of municipal drinking water.

At our October 1 Source Protection Committee meeting we received a sobering reminder of why we are investing time and money into developing local source water protection plans. Our meeting featured a presentation entitled, **Walkerton — The Cost of Getting it Wrong: Understanding the Consequences of Failing to Protect Drinking Water from Source to Tap** by Bruce Davidson, co-founder of The Concerned Walkerton Citizens and a member of the Saugeen, Grey Sauble, Northern Bruce Peninsula Source Protection Committee. Mr. Davidson gave members an inside look into the systemic breakdown of Walkerton's municipal water system in 2000. He recounted what happened to the community including the death of seven people, thousands of others becoming ill, overflowing hospitals, the closure of schools, the transport of children to safer communities, and the economic devastation of businesses. He spoke poignantly about the chronic illnesses that continue to afflict many people in the community to this day. The presentation gave everyone a renewed understanding of the importance of a coordinated and multi-prong approach to maintaining safe municipal drinking water. Mr. Davidson also underscored our collective responsibility in protecting our water resources through source water protection planning efforts across Ontario.

Following the presentation, the Committee finalized comments on a provincial Discussion Paper outlining proposed **Requirements for the Content and Preparation of Source Protection Plans**. These comments were submitted to the Ministry of the Environment and will help shape a source protection plan regulation. The committee solicited input from local municipalities on the discussion paper by holding a session where participants were given an overview of the proposed requirements and then walked through scenarios for which mock planning policies were developed to address hypothetical drinking water threats. A draft source protection plan regulation is expected later this year and the province will post it for public comment. Source protection plans must be completed by August 2012.

Our **next SPC meeting** is on Thursday, **November 5 at 1 pm** at the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority office at 3889 Rideau Valley Drive in Manotick. If you can join us, we'd love to see you! Visitors always welcome.

Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Region

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