

Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program

Protect our water. Get funding to upgrade or inspect your septic system.

Is it time to upgrade or inspect your septic system? You may be eligible for funding to upgrade or inspect your septic system if you live near a municipal well or water intake. The Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program will cover up to 80 per cent of the cost of an eligible project, to a maximum of \$7,000. If you install an advanced septic system, the program will increase coverage to a maximum of \$15,000.

Why are old or faulty septic systems a problem?

Septic systems that are not regularly inspected or poorly maintained can be a significant pathway for contaminants to enter drinking water. Regularly inspecting and properly upgrading your septic system benefits you and protects your municipality's drinking water.

How do I know there is a problem with my septic system?

The seven key signs of problems with septic systems are:

- a backed-up or slow moving toilet or drain
- foul odours
- an overflow of sewage around your septic system
- unusually thick grass and tree roots growing in or around the septic system and surrounding ground is soggy and soft

- dosing pumps run constantly or do not run at all
- well water tests indicate high levels of nitrates, bacteria, or other contaminants
- large amounts of algae growth in or around nearby lakes or ponds.

Am I eligible for funding?

Yes, if your property is within or extends into the following eligible areas:

- 100-metre radius of a municipal wellhead
- 200-metre radius of a surface water intake
- the approved two-year time-of-travel around a municipal wellhead or
- the approved intake protection zone-one (IPZ-1) around a surface water intake.

What projects are funded?

- replacing/repairing septic tanks and/or leaching beds
- replacing holding tanks
- pumping septic tanks
- adding plumbing connections
- transferring wastewater to septic tanks and/or leaching beds through plumbing connections/pump
- connecting to a municipal sewer line and decommissioning the existing septic system (These are two separate projects but funding for connections cannot be received unless the existing well has been decommissioned).

What costs can I recover?

- fees for required permits and approvals for eligible projects
- purchased materials and supplies
- contract labour
- professional fees and technical support
- fees for related design, inspection and construction
- fees to connect to a municipal sewer line

How can I apply for this funding and learn more?

If you are a farmer, you can receive up to 100 per cent of the cost of these activities through the Canada-Ontario Farm Stewardship Program and the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program. Details about the program and how to apply to the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association are available at:
http://www.ontariosoilcrop.org/cms/en/Programs/Drinking_Water.aspx?menuid=100

Other property owners can contact their local conservation authority to learn more and apply for funding at:
<http://conservation-ontario.on.ca/find/index.html>

You can learn more about the Clean Water Act at: www.ontario.ca/cleanwater

This publication is for your information only. For compliance purposes, you should always refer to the Clean Water Act or related regulations.

