

November 2014

Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Plan *Information for Municipalities*

The Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Plan

We need safe, reliable sources of drinking water now and in the future. Under the *Clean Water Act*, regions in Ontario must produce a local, science-based plan to protect sources of municipal drinking water from contamination and overuse. After several years of scientific work, oversight by a multi-stakeholder committee, extensive public input and broad consultation, the Plan for our region—the *Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Plan* received provincial approval on August 27, 2014.

The Plan is made up of policies to address activities and land uses that pose a threat to municipal drinking water. While there are some non-mandatory policies that apply region wide, mandatory policies can only apply in a Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA) or an Intake Protection Zone (IPZ). These are the mapped vulnerable areas near a municipal well or close to a river upstream of a water treatment plant.

Federal departments, Provincial ministries, Health Units, the Technical Standards and Safety Authority, Conservation Authorities and municipalities all have policy implementation responsibilities under the *Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Plan*.

Municipal Responsibilities

The policy implementation responsibilities of each municipality depend on whether or not the municipality has a drinking water system or a WHPA or IPZ extending into its area of jurisdiction. Under the *Clean Water Act*, municipalities with WHPAs or IPZs within their boundaries are responsible for implementation within those areas even if the drinking water system is in the neighbouring municipality.

Key things to know:

- * The Source Protection Plan comes into effect on January 1, 2015
- * Provincial funding will cover implementation costs for small municipalities until December 2015 by which time many implementation tasks will be completed
- * Provincially funded source protection staff at the Conservation Authorities are assisting with preparing for implementation
- * Only a small number of residents and businesses in each municipality will be affected by mandatory requirements in the Plan

Municipalities with Drinking Water Systems and a WHPA or IPZ

Carleton Place
Merrickville-Wolford
Mississippi Mills
North Grenville
Ottawa
Perth
Smiths Falls
Westport

See yellow and blue boxes on next page for implementation responsibilities

Municipalities with a WHPA or IPZ but no Drinking Water System

Beckwith
Drummond / North Elmsley
Lanark County
Leeds Grenville
Montague
Rideau Lakes
Tay Valley

See yellow box on next page for implementation responsibilities

Municipalities With No Drinking Water System or WHPA or IPZ within the Mississippi-Rideau Region

Addington Highlands
Athens
Augusta
Central Frontenac
Clarence-Rockland
Elizabethtown-Kitley
Greater Madawaska
Lanark Highlands
North Dundas
North Frontenac
South Frontenac
See green box on next page for recommendations

Counties
Frontenac
Lennox & Addington
Prescott & Russell
Renfrew
Stormont Dundas Glengarry

Implementation Responsibilities Municipalities with Wellhead Protection Areas or Intake Protection Zones

Legally Binding

1. **By January 1, 2015**—Establish a Risk Management Office or enter into an agreement to delegate *Clean Water Act* Part IV enforcement authority to another body (all municipalities except the City of Ottawa have delegated this responsibility to the Conservation Authorities). *Part IV of the Clean Water Act gives municipalities new powers to prohibit or require a Risk Management Plan for activities that are considered significant threats to drinking water.*
2. **By January 1, 2015**—Set up a process to ensure that Planning or Building applications are screened for applicable source protection policies (source protection staff at the Conservation Authorities have developed a screening process and tool and will provide orientation for interested municipal staff prior to January 1, 2015).
3. **Starting January 1, 2015**—Prohibit the future establishment of certain types of large sewage works, such as industrial effluent discharges, in Wellhead Protection Areas and Intake Protection Zones using municipal authority under the *Planning Act*.
4. Amend Official Plan and zoning by-laws to conform to source protection policies at the next scheduled update.
5. Initiate an education and outreach program for residents and businesses in the Wellhead Protection Areas and Intake Protection Zones by January 1, 2016 (source protection staff are preparing educational materials and a re-designed source protection website for this purpose).
6. Report annually on implementation (source protection staff will provide a template for ease of reporting).

Non-legally Binding

1. Install signs to mark the Wellhead Protection Areas and Intake Protection Zones.
2. Incorporate information about these areas into the municipal Emergency Response Plan.
3. Provide information about these areas to businesses that transport potential contaminants.
4. Provide greater oversight of geothermal energy systems in Wellhead Protection Areas.
5. Develop and implement a Road Salt Management Plan and promote Smart Salt Practices.

Additional Implementation Responsibilities Municipalities with Drinking Water Systems

These policies only apply in the most vulnerable part of a Wellhead Protection Area or Intake Protection Zone which has a vulnerability score of 10 and is located closest to the municipal well or surface water intake:

1. Require connection to municipal services where services are available (existing septic systems may remain until the end of their service life). Requirement must be established by January 1, 2016.
2. Require a lot grade and drainage plan as part of building permit applications when a septic system is proposed in unserviced areas. Requirement must be established by July 1, 2015.
3. Conduct a sanitary sewer inspection and maintenance program at five year intervals. Program must be initiated by January 1, 2016.
4. Develop and implement a Road Salt Management Plan and promote Smart Salt Practices (mandatory for Carleton Place, Perth and Smiths Falls only) by January 1, 2016.

Recommendations for All Municipalities

The technical studies conducted in the Mississippi-Rideau Region concluded that the most of the region has a “Highly Vulnerable Aquifer”. To protect groundwater region-wide, all municipalities are encouraged to develop and implement a Road Salt Management Plan to govern the use of road salt by the municipality and promote Smart Salt Practices (using resources available through the Smart Salt Council) to snow removal contractors and building managers.

How are residents and local businesses affected by the Source Protection Plan?

- No residential or agricultural activities are prohibited under the Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Plan.
- A small number of people in each municipality will require a Risk Management Plan for activities that pose a risk to drinking water (storing fuel or chemicals, keeping livestock or spreading or storing nutrients such as manure in a Wellhead Protection Area or Intake Protection Zone).
- Three properties in the region will be subject to the septic system maintenance inspection program which is a new requirement under the Building Code. Affected people will be contacted by the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit who are implementing this new requirement.
- New or replacement septic systems will not be permitted where municipal sewer services are available.
- New commercial uses of nine dangerous chemicals will be prohibited (existing businesses may continue use but a Risk Management Plan must be in place).
- Residents and businesses will receive information about the Wellhead Protection Area or Intake Protection Zone and how to be good stewards of the nearby drinking water source.
- Communities will enjoy peace of mind knowing that safeguards are in place to reduce the likelihood of a contamination event which can adversely affect everything from human health to property values.

What is Part IV of the Clean Water Act?

This part gives municipalities new powers to either prohibit or require a Risk Management Plan for activities that are considered to be significant drinking water threats. Specially trained Risk Management Officials and Risk Management Inspectors (similar to Building Officials and Inspectors) must be appointed to carry out this regulatory role. Under the *Clean Water Act*, the municipality may transfer this responsibility to another body.

What is a Risk Management Plan?

This is a document that outlines what measures are in place to reduce or eliminate the risk that a certain activity will contaminate the municipal drinking water source. Risk management staff and the person engaging in the activity discuss and decide what should be in the plan. The Risk Management Plan includes and accounts for measures that are already in place so that some people will only need to document what they are already doing to protect drinking water.

Risk management staff will contact potentially affected people and walk them through the process. There is no fee for a Risk Management Plan for an existing activity.

Properties Requiring a Risk Management Plan in the Mississippi-Rideau Region

Beckwith—3
Drummond/North Elmsley—5
Merrickville-Wolford—7
Mississippi Mills—6
Montague—5
North Grenville—6
Ottawa*—110
Rideau Lakes—4
Tay Valley—9
Westport—15

**Includes Carp, Munster, Richmond and urban Ottawa*

For more information contact:

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