

PLANNING TO PROTECT DRINKING WATER SOURCES: Risk Management Plans



FACT
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Source Water Protection is a provincial program to protect our municipal drinking water sources (water found in lakes, rivers and underground) from contamination and overuse.



Managing the risk

If you are a property or business owner located near a municipal well or surface water intake, then you have a special responsibility when it comes to protecting source water. That's because certain activities, when carried out near these drinking water sources, can pose a risk of contamination. This responsibility also applies if you are leasing, renting or subletting the land.

Ontario's *Clean Water Act* and the South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Plan are in place to protect source water from contamination and overuse now and into the future. The plan contains policies that may limit activities that present a significant threat when they occur in a vulnerable area near a municipal drinking water source.

IS YOUR PROPERTY OR BUSINESS IN A VULNERABLE AREA?

To find out, contact your municipal planning department or local Risk Management Official.

If you are in a vulnerable area, you may have to take extra steps to ensure your activities are done in a way that protects our drinking water sources.



What kinds of activities could be affected?

Activities that may pose a threat if they take place in vulnerable areas include:

- municipal: waste, wastewater, sewage, stormwater, road salt
- agricultural: biosolids, manure, commercial fertilizer, pesticides, livestock grazing
- commercial: fuel, organic solvents, dense non-aqueous phase liquids (DNAPLs)
- residential: operation of septic system and fuel storage
- water taking (activities that take large quantities of water from the ground)



My building application is affected by a source protection policy. What happens next?

If a municipal planning official says that your application is affected by a source protection policy, you'll need to complete and submit a "Section 59 Application" to your local Risk Management Official. This form and details about potential fees is available from your municipality or from your Risk Management Official directly.

After the official receives your completed application, they will review it, the source protection policies, and mapping for your property. Based on that information, the official will determine what, if any, further action is required to reduce the threat to drinking water sources, and will issue you a notice of their decision.

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My building application

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Their decisions will fall into one of the following categories:

Clean Water Act does not apply

Your proposed activity can proceed as there is no requirement under the *Clean Water Act* at this time.

Risk Management Plan required

If the threat of your activity can be managed to reduce the risk to drinking water sources, your local Risk Management Official will work with you to develop risk management measures and establish a Risk Management Plan. Your proposed activity cannot proceed until this plan is in place.

Prohibition

If your proposed activity poses a significant threat to source water that cannot be safely managed, it may be prohibited under the *Clean Water Act*. Prohibition is only used in rare cases.

WHO ARE RISK MANAGEMENT OFFICIALS (RMOs)?

Risk Management Officials, or RMOs, are specially trained and qualified to evaluate risks to municipal drinking water sources. They work with you to develop Risk Management Plans. You might also meet a Risk Management Inspector, or RMI, who enforces Risk Management Plans similar to the way a building inspector enforces the Ontario Building Code. Risk Management Officials and inspectors carry provincially issued identification that you can ask to see at any time.



What happens if I need a Risk Management Plan?

Your local Risk Management Official will help you find smart, cost-effective solutions intended to keep our municipal drinking water safe.

If you need a Risk Management Plan, they will speak to you on the phone or in person and may then schedule a site visit to your property. At the visit, they will gather the information they need to develop the plan, and answer any questions you might have.

After the visit, they will create a plan for you. You'll have a chance to review the plan and follow up with them with any questions or suggestions. Or sometimes, you'll create the plan and they will review it.

Once you are satisfied with the plan and it is signed by both you and your Risk Management Official, it becomes legally binding.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT

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