



Water falls on **your** shoulders.

Safeguarding drinking water in the

Why you should care about Drinking Water Source Protection Programs

In May 2000, residents of Walkerton drank tap water that came from their municipal well. More than 2,000 became seriously ill and seven people died. Their water supply was contaminated.

The crisis resulted in an extensive inquiry, led by Justice Dennis O'Connor. Following the inquiry, provincial legislation was introduced and the Clean Water Act was passed.

The Clean Water Act requires communities across Ontario to establish Source Protection Committees to develop science-based drinking water protection plans to safeguard human health.

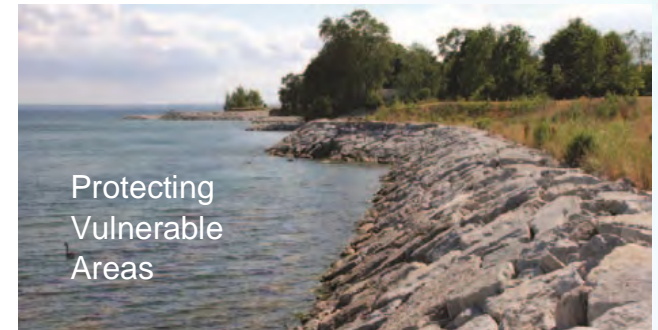
Following government approval, source water protection policies will be implemented across the province to reduce risk in areas that are 'vulnerable' to contamination. Primary contaminants include chemicals such as fuel, solvents, pesticides, and bacteria and viruses from human and animal waste. Bacteria were the contaminants in Walkerton.

The Clean Water Act is designed to protect water before it reaches the treatment plant. Preventing contamination is safer and cheaper than dealing with problems after the fact, which is why we all have a role to play.



Protecting Lake Ontario water supplies

Lake Ontario is the source of drinking water for about 90 percent of those who live in the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Region. Five intake pipes deliver water from Lake Ontario to treatment plants located along the shoreline from Oakville to Hamilton. The pipes extend about one kilometre into the lake and range in diameter between 1.5 and 2.4 metres. Lying 5 to 17 metres below the water surface, the pipes provide enough water to fill more than 500 Olympic-size swimming pools every day.



Protecting Vulnerable Areas

Each pipe is surrounded by Intake Protection Zones. These zones include areas of land adjacent to streams where runoff water can quickly reach the intake. The zones ensure that treatment plants will have enough time to stop operations before contaminated water can enter the system.



Protecting well-based

Not everyone's water comes from Lake Ontario. Others depend on private or municipal wells and local water treatment plants. Relying on municipal supplies are parts of the communities

These communities use water flowing underground through aquifers, which is why Wellhead Protection Areas are based on the time required for groundwater to reach the pumping well. The drinking water supply is



Protecting other vulnerable areas

Other areas that must be protected include 'recharge areas', where surface water seeps into soil and rock to replenish the water table, and 'highly vulnerable aquifers', where an aquifer is close to the surface or lies beneath very permeable soil or rock. Protecting these

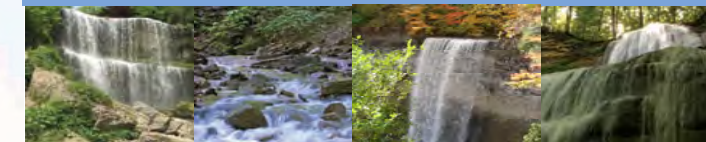


Working together: The Source Protection

The Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Committee consists of a chair and 15 members representing local homebuilders, farmers, golf courses, municipal governments and others.

With support from technical staff, Conservation Halton, and Hamilton Conservation Authority, the Committee is responsible for producing Assessment Reports that identify existing and potential threats. The Assessment Reports provide important and necessary information to develop Source Protection Plans and new policies that may affect certain land use activities in vulnerable areas. Proposed Assessment Reports and Protection Plans will be posted on the Halton-Hamilton Source Protection website: www.protectingwater.ca. You are encouraged to review them and get involved in this open and public process.

From fertilizing lawns and gardens to safely discarding paint, fuels and other solvents, your actions may affect the quality of drinking water.



To find out if you live in a vulnerable area and how drinking water protection policies may affect activities on your property, please contact:

Halton-Hamilton Source Protection Region

4052 Milborough Line RR#2
Campbellville, Ontario L0P 1B0



For more information about the Clean Water Act and how you can play a role in protecting drinking water sources in the Halton-Hamilton Source

www.protectingwater.ca