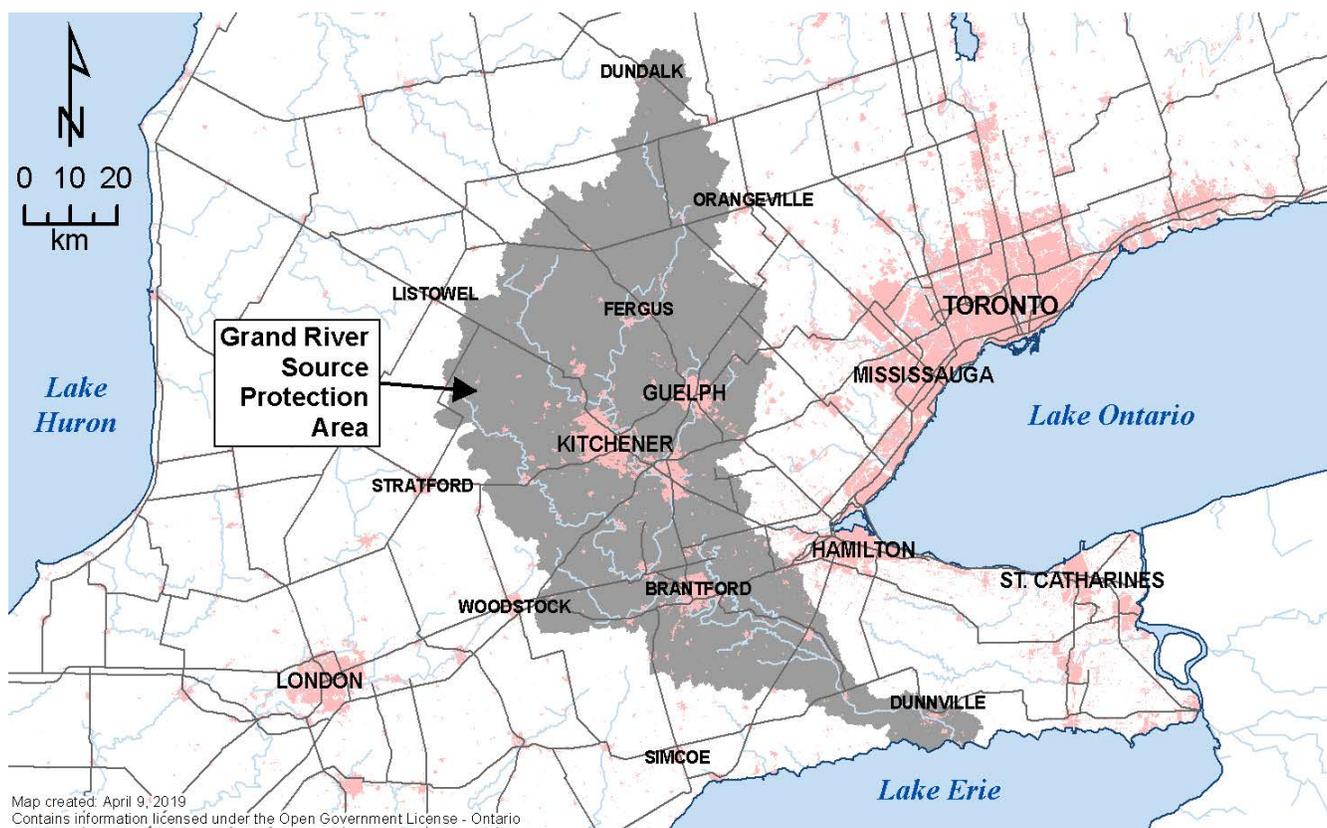


# Source Protection Annual Progress Report

## I. Introduction

This annual progress report outlines the progress made in implementing the source protection plan for the Grand River Source Protection Area, as required by the Clean Water Act and regulations.

We acknowledge and recognize the tremendous efforts made by our local municipality, stakeholders and Source Protection Committee in the development of the Source Protection Plan and implementation of Source Protection policies.



## II. A message from your local Source Protection Committee

- P : Progressing Well/On Target – The majority of the source protection plan policies have been implemented and/or are progressing.**
- S : Satisfactory – Some of the source protection plan policies have been implemented and/or are progressing.
- L : Limited progress – A few of source protection plan policies have been implemented and/or are progressing.

7479 significant drinking water threats have been identified in the Grand River Source Protection Area since the original source protection plan approval or approval of amendments that include new or revised protection zones. The percentage of overall progress made in addressing threats is 21%. The percentage of overall progress made is likely a reflection of progress for municipalities that have a large number of significant threats. For these municipalities, implementation may be phased over many years given the large number of properties and limited staff resources. Some municipalities have opted to prioritize properties and activities with the highest potential for impact. Ninety-seven percent of legally-binding plan policies that address significant drinking water threats are implemented, in progress, or implemented because policy outcome(s) have been evaluated and it is determined that no further action(s) is required.

### III. Our Watershed

To learn more, please read our assessment report(s) and source protection plan(s)

The Grand River Source Protection Area (watershed) covers an area of approximately 6,800 square kilometres, and contains 39 upper, lower and single-tier municipalities and two First Nations bands. The watershed contributes about ten percent of the drainage to Lake Erie.

The residents of the Grand River watershed receive drinking water supplies from both private and municipal supplies. 50 municipal systems and one First Nation system provide water to 865,538 residents in the watershed.

## IV. At a Glance: Progress on Source Protection Plan Implementation

### 1. Source Protection Plan Policies

P: Progressing Well/On Target

The majority (97%) of legally-binding plan policies that address significant drinking water threats are implemented, in progress, or implemented because policy outcome(s) have been evaluated and it is determined that no further action(s) is required.

### 2. Municipal Progress: Addressing Risks on the Ground

Twenty-two municipalities in the Grand River Source Protection Area have vulnerable areas where policies addressing significant drinking water threats apply.

P: Progressing Well/On Target - Thirty-one municipalities in the Grand River Source Protection Area are required to review and update their Official Plan to ensure it conforms with the Grand River Source Protection Plan the next time they undertake an Official Plan review under the Planning Act. Eleven Official Plan amendments have been completed, fifteen are in process, and five have not been started.

### 3. Septic Inspections

P: Progressing Well/On Target

Seven percent of on-site sewage systems have been inspected in accordance with the Ontario Building Code during the five-year inspection period (2018-2022) within the Grand River Source Protection Area. Some municipalities with a large number of systems that require inspections have not yet initiated their inspection program for this period, resulting in the low percentage of systems inspected in the Grand River Source Protection Area. None of the inspections required minor maintenance, e.g., pump-outs, or major maintenance such as tank replacement.

### 4. Risk Management Plans

P: Progressing Well/On Target

Fifty-four risk management plans were established in the Grand River Source Protection Area in the previous calendar year. Since the Grand River Source Protection Plan took effect, 136 risk management plans have been established in the Grand River Source Protection Area.

195 inspections have been carried out or planned by a Risk Management Official/Inspector for prohibited or regulated activities in the previous calendar year. None of the inspections resulted in non-compliance with the specific contents of the risk management plan.

## 5. Provincial Progress: Addressing Risks on the Ground

P: Progressing Well/On Target

Ontario ministries are reviewing previously issued provincial approvals (i.e., prescribed instruments, such as environmental compliance approvals under the Environmental Protection Act) where they have been identified as a tool in the Grand River Source Protection Plan to address existing activities that pose a significant risk to sources of drinking water. The provincial approvals are being amended or revoked where necessary to conform with plan policies. The Grand River Source Protection policies set out a timeline of 3 years to complete the review and make any necessary changes. The ministries have completed this for 99.8% of previously issued provincial approvals in the Grand River Source Protection Area.

## 6. Source Protection Awareness and Change in Behaviour

Twenty-one Drinking Water Protection Zones signs have been installed in the Grand River Source Protection Area since the Source Protection Plan took effect.

The following positive outcomes have been reported by municipalities in the Grand River Source Protection Area:

- people engaged in significant drinking water threat activities are interested in protecting source water and are willing to swap out chemicals for more environmentally-sensitive ones
- increased education of residents about household chemical storage, pesticides and fertilizer use and how they may leach into groundwater sources
- land owners are increasingly open to participating in the source protection process when they understand the reasons for Source Protection Plan policies
- storm sewers are better protected from accidental spills
- local groundwater monitoring program updated to include sodium and chloride
- increased Smart About Salt training

## 7. Source Protection Plan Policies: Summary of Delays

Delays in implementing source protection plan policies have been noted in the County of Brant, Townships of Amaranth and East-Garafraxa, Haldimand County, Township of Perth East, and the Region of Waterloo.

Summary of rationale for delays:

- the implementation of some policies has been prioritized over others because of legal effect, e.g., non-binding policies vs legally-binding policies
- policy implementation has been staggered over time as a result of large numbers of threats, properties and limited municipal resources
- lack of eligible properties, e.g., delayed implementation of an incentive policy due to a lack of properties that would be eligible to receive the municipal incentive
- municipality has not yet discussed or created a plan to implement a policy

Actions planned to implement policies:

- municipality to conduct threat verification work for existing threat activities that may be taking place on properties
- municipality to identify if it has spill prevention plans, contingency plans or emergency response plans so that any policies involving those plans, can be addressed
- initiate municipal discussions in 2020 to develop a plan of action to implement a policy

## 8. Source Water Quality: Monitoring and Actions

There are twenty-seven drinking water systems or wellfields in the Grand River Source Protection Area with identified drinking water issues.

Municipalities have monitoring and treatments systems in place to ensure that municipal drinking water meets the requirements under Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002.

Issue Contributing Areas for Mount Pleasant (chloride) and Bethel (nitrate) drinking water systems (County of Brant) were removed upon the approval of the updated Grand River Source Protection Plan and Assessment Report on August 16, 2019. Two wellfields in the Region of Waterloo report decreasing concentrations/trends. For those systems or wellfields where there are no improvements, municipalities will continue to collect data to monitor the issues.

## 9. Science-based Assessment Reports: Work Plans

A Section 36 workplan for updates to the Grand River Assessment Report and Source Protection Plan was submitted to the Ministry in November 2019.

Examples of tasks that are included in the proposed Section 36 workplan:

- growth and infrastructure changes, e.g., new drinking water supply well(s) to be brought online
- results of environmental monitoring programs, e.g., review of monitoring data to evaluate existing or the potential for Issues identified at municipal drinking water wells
- technical rule changes, e.g., review and consider Phase II Technical Rule changes for incorporation into the assessment report and source protection plan
- policy effectiveness, e.g., revise policies related to the application of salt to improve plowing and salting practices

## 10. More from the Watershed

To learn more about the Grand River Source Protection Area visit,  
<http://www.sourcewater.ca>