

## Province Protecting Drinking Water Sources in South-Central Ontario

*Ontario Approves Plan for the Grand River Watershed*

December 3, 2015 12:00 P.M.

Ontario has approved a plan to protect sources of drinking water in the Grand River watershed area in south-central Ontario.

The [source protection plan](#), developed by the local municipalities and the Lake Erie Region source protection committee, will take effect July 1, 2016.

Source protection plans are locally developed, science-based plans designed to protect the health of the lakes, rivers and underground water sources that supply municipal drinking water systems. The plans set out actions to eliminate, manage or reduce potential risks to drinking water sources and Ontario is among the few jurisdictions in Canada to have source water protection plans in place.

This approved plan will help the area:

- Create management plans to help communities reduce the risks associated with waste disposal sites, manure, livestock, road salt, pesticides, fuel, biosolids, snow storage, organic solvents and commercial fertilizers
- Complement these plans by implementing education and outreach programs that promote best management practices for these significant risks
- Monitor the implementation and effectiveness of targets and goals outlined in the plan.

Ontario has now approved all 22 source water protection plans for the province. Altogether, the plans cover areas where over 95 per cent of the province's population live.

Protecting the province's clean drinking water and the environment is part of the government's plan to build Ontario up. The four-part plan includes investing in people's talents and skills, making the largest investment in public infrastructure in Ontario's history, creating a dynamic, innovative environment where business thrives, and building a secure retirement savings plan.

### QUOTES

" Few things are as important to our health as having safe water to drink. Ontario's approach to protect drinking water has made our tap water among the best protected in the world. Protecting the sources of drinking water - our lakes, rivers and groundwater - is the foundation of our safety

net."

- Glen Murray

Minister of the Environment and Climate Change

" Formal approval of the Grand River Source Protection Plan is a major milestone in the committee's work with its community, agriculture, industry, conservation authority, municipal and provincial partners to protect and enhance municipal drinking water supplies. We look forward to measuring and monitoring the plan's future success."

- Wendy Wright-Cascaden

Lake Erie source protection committee chair (Acting)

## QUICK FACTS

- The [Clean Water Act](#) established 19 local committees across Ontario. Each committee developed science-based plans that address risks to the water that supply municipal drinking water systems.
- Of the area's 45 municipal drinking water systems, 43 draw water from groundwater wells. Two systems, as well as the First Nation's system, draw water from surface water sources, that being the Grand River and Lake Erie.
- These municipal drinking water systems service about 86 per cent of the area's 900,000 residents. The remaining population receives its drinking water from non-municipal systems or from private wells, cisterns or intakes.
- The drinking water system serving the Six Nations of the Grand River First Nation reserve was brought into the source protection planning process at the request of the Band Council through a Band Council Resolution and an amendment to O. Reg. 287/07.
- Ontario recently passed the [Great Lakes Protection Act](#), building on existing Great Lakes partnerships for joint action to fight climate change, reduce harmful algal blooms, protect wetlands and tackle other complex problems in the Great Lakes basin.

## LEARN MORE

- [Find out more about other source protection areas.](#)

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