



Niagara's Source Protection Annual Report: 2015

Where are we now?

Niagara  Region

www.sourceprotection-niagara.ca



This annual report is provided in accordance with Section 81 of the Clean Water Act, 2006.

It outlines the activities undertaken by Niagara Region to implement Source Protection Plan policies in 2015.

Background

The purpose of the Clean Water Act is to protect existing and future sources of drinking water by preventing contaminants from entering sources of municipal drinking water. There are 21 threat categories that are prescribed in the Clean Water Act and Ontario Regulation 287/07, which are considered significant drinking water threats. The Source Protection Plan (SPP) for the Niagara Peninsula Source Protection Area was approved by the Province on Dec. 12, 2013, under the Clean Water Act, 2006. The Niagara Peninsula Source Protection Area applies to the same jurisdiction as the Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA), and includes the Regional Municipality of Niagara as well as portions of the City of Hamilton and Haldimand County. The effective date of the Source Protection plan was Oct. 1, 2014.

Appointment

In 2015, a report was drafted with the recommendation that delegated authority for the appointment of the Risk Management Official (RMO) and Inspector (RMI) be approved by Regional Council in 2016. This report will be considered by Council in January 2016.

Local Municipalities Are Engaged

In early 2014 a working group was formed consisting of Regional, municipal and NPCA staff. This group worked on drafting official plan amendment text and mapping to conform to the SPP. In April 2015, Regional Council approved the recommended amendments to the Regional Official Plan.

Planning Applications

The working group has also implemented a planning and building application review process which requires applications in vulnerable areas to be circulated to the RMO for review. A guidance document is also being created to assist with implementation.

Education and Outreach

A communication plan was developed to assist with Education and Outreach policies. Communication initiatives completed include informational brochures and sponsoring participation in specific training (Smart about Salt). As well as presentations to various groups including Niagara Snow School, Port Colborne Environmental Advisory Committee as well as source protection and water compliance training for internal staff. Participation in an agricultural engagement and approaches to risk management workshop was also completed to assist with these initiatives.

Risk Management Plans

Letters as well as follow up phone calls have been made to six property owners which were identified to have potential significant threats on their property requiring risk management plans. Three site visits were conducted in 2015 which indicated the potential to eliminate six significant threats.

Efforts to Verify Potential Significant Threats

Over the next year, Niagara Region will dedicate internal resources to verify potential significant threats identified in the Assessment Report. Potential threats to water quality were ranked as significant, moderate or low based upon proximity to drinking water sources and the volume, mobility and toxicity of a potential contaminant source defined in legislation. Significant threats are prioritized for source protection efforts. A site survey was developed in 2014 to assist in the threats verification process.

