



FACT SHEET

As part of Conservation Ontario's network of 36 conservation authorities, the Nickel District Conservation Authority (NDCA) will work with local government, landowners and community groups to develop a proactive source water protection plan and programs that benefit local watershed residents. Formed in 1973 the NDCA has extensive technical expertise and experience studying water issues and implementing natural resource management programs.

Source Water Protection

- Source water protection works to ensure the protection of surface water sources (springs, lakes, rivers, streams and wetlands) and ground water sources (aquifers) from contamination or overuse so that we have sufficient clean water for current human consumption and for future generations;
- Both natural and human activities affect the quality and quantity of our water sources;
- The best way to protect water sources is by managing potential threats within specific watershed areas;
- Source water protection is the first step in a multi-barrier approach that includes: source water protection, latest water treatment systems, reliable distribution systems, professional training for water managers and careful and regular testing of water supplies.

Watershed Approach

- A typical watershed is defined by the land area from which surface runoff (water, sediments, nutrients and even contaminants) or groundwater drains into a common body of water such as a lake, river, stream or a creek;
- Some watersheds cross traditional jurisdictions (municipal, provincial and even international) and political boundaries.

Source Water Protection Plans

- Protecting our sources of water requires planning;
- Justice Denis O'Connor, former Commissioner of the Walkerton Inquiry stated that every watershed in Ontario needs a plan on how to protect its water sources;
- The following steps are being proposed for developing a source water protection plan:
 1. Perform technical studies and assemble data
 2. Set up SWP committees
 3. Review data and identify threats to source water areas
 4. Develop a plan of action with stakeholders and partners to reduce threats
 5. Consult with municipalities and the general public about the proposed plan of action
 6. Final approval of the plan by the province

Role of the Source Water Protection Planning Committee

- The legislation passed by the government suggests that decisions about water must be made on a watershed basis that is uniquely tailored to each community;
 - A multi-sector source water protection committee will be established, to review technical data and make decisions about how our water should be protected;
 - At this time, the provincial government has passed the *Clean Water Act* and is in the process of developing the regulations that will guide the specific framework for Source Water Protection Committees to develop plans for each watershed;
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- The planning committee is responsible for establishing multi-stakeholder working groups and sub-committees.

Role of NDCA

- The NDCA role in source water protection is three fold:
 1. Coordinate the development of SWP plan by bringing together local stakeholders from various community sectors.
 2. Provide the required technical expertise and advice to develop SWP plan; together with the municipal and provincial governments and private experts.
 3. Provide ongoing education and awareness on Source Water Protection.

For more information on this document please contact:

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Additional Sources of Information:

Nickel District Conservation Authority: www.nickeldistrict.ca

Conservation Ontario: www.conservation-ontario.ca

Ontario Ministry of Environment Drinking Water Portal: www.ontario.ca/drinkingwater

Ontario Ministry of Environment: www.ene.gov.on.ca

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources: www.mnr.gov.on.ca

Environment Canada: www.ec.gc.ca/water