

## **Source Protection - Recommendations**

### **Recommendation 1**

Drinking water sources should be protected by developing watershed-based source protection plans. Source protection plans should be required for all watersheds in Ontario.

### **Recommendation 2**

The Ministry of the Environment should ensure that draft source protection plans are prepared through an inclusive process of local consultation. Where appropriate, this process should be managed by conservation authorities.

### **Recommendation 3**

Draft source protection plans should be reviewed by the Ministry of the Environment and subject to ministry approval.

### **Recommendation 4**

Provincial government decisions that affect the quality of drinking water sources must be consistent with approved source protection plans.

### **Recommendation 5**

Where the potential exists for a significant direct threat to drinking water sources, municipal official plans and decisions must be consistent with the applicable source protection plan. Otherwise, municipal official plans and decisions should have regard to the source protection plan. The plans should designate areas where consistency is required.

### **Recommendation 6**

The provincial government should provide for limited rights of appeal to challenge source protection plans, and provincial and municipal decisions that are inconsistent with the plans.

### **Recommendation 7**

The provincial government should ensure that sufficient funds are available to complete the planning and adoption of source protection plans.

### **Recommendation 8**

Conservation authorities (or, in their absence, the Ministry of the Environment) should be responsible for implementing local initiatives to educate landowners, industry, and the public about the requirements and importance of drinking water source protection.

### **Recommendation 9**

Septic systems should be inspected as a condition for the transfer of a deed.

### **Recommendation 10**

The Ministry of the Environment should not issue Certificates of Approval for the spreading of waste materials unless they are compatible with the applicable source protection plan.

### **Recommendation 11**

The Ministry of the Environment should take the lead role in regulating the potential impacts of farm activities on drinking water sources. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs should provide technical support to the Ministry of the Environment and should continue to advise farmers about the protection of drinking water sources.

**Recommendation 12**

Where necessary, the Ministry of the Environment should establish minimum regulatory requirements for agricultural activities that generate impacts on drinking water sources.

**Recommendation 13**

All large or intensive farms, and all farms in areas designated as sensitive or high-risk by the applicable source protection plan, should be required to develop binding individual water protection plans consistent with the source protection plan.

**Recommendation 14**

Once a farm has in place an individual water protection plan that is consistent with the applicable source protection plan, municipalities should not have the authority to require that farm to meet a higher standard of protection of drinking water sources than that which is laid out in the farm's water protection plan.

**Recommendation 15**

The Ministry of the Environment should work with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, agricultural groups, conservation authorities, municipalities, and other interested groups to create a provincial framework for developing individual farm water protection plans.

**Recommendation 16**

The provincial government, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in collaboration with the Ministry of the Environment, should establish a system of cost-share incentives for water protection projects on farms.

**Recommendation 17**

The regulation of other industries by the provincial government and by municipalities must be consistent with provincially approved source protection plans.

**Recommendation 38**

Sampling plans should provide for sampling under the conditions most challenging to the system, such as after heavy rainfalls or spring floods.

**Recommendation 65**

The provincial government should develop a comprehensive "source to tap" drinking water policy covering all elements of the provision of drinking water, from source protection to standards development, treatment, distribution, and emergency response.

**Recommendation 68**

The provincial government should amend the Environmental Protection Act to implement the recommendations regarding source protection.

**Recommendation 70**

The provincial government should create a Watershed Management Branch within the Ministry of the Environment to be responsible for oversight of watershed-based source protection plans and, if implemented, watershed management plans.

**Recommendation 88**

Ontario First Nations should be invited to join in the watershed planning process outlined in Chapter 4 of this report.