



## Implementation of Source Protection

# THREAT VERIFICATION INSPECTIONS

June 2015

The Town of Wasaga Beach is working on the implementation of the Source Protection Plan to meet the requirements of the Provincial Clean Water Act. Municipalities are already responsible for the delivery of municipal drinking water and land use planning and the source protection process will build on this framework. Source protection introduces various tools to manage land uses and gives municipalities the responsibility and authority to regulate activities that may pose a risk to drinking water sources on a site-specific basis, where such activities are located within surface water intake protection zones or wellhead protection areas (also known as vulnerable areas).

### **What is the purpose of these threat verification inspections?**

As part of the source protection planning process, studies were conducted to assess the vulnerability of the municipal water source and identify the locations of any activities that may pose a risk of contaminating the drinking water source. These activities are referred to as drinking water threats.

The initial threat assessment made generalized assumptions based on land use. As part of the next steps to implement source protection, we must now verify if such activities are actually occurring at the locations that were identified.

### **What activities are drinking water threats?**

Contaminants from a variety of activities on the land can negatively affect groundwater or surface water if not managed properly. Some examples include:

- Handling or storage of chemicals
- Storage and spreading of road salt
- Fuel storage
- Use and storage of fertilizers and pesticides
- Septic systems
- Municipal sewers, treatment plants, and landfills
- Animal feedlots and spreading of manure

### **What happens if I am engaged in one of these activities?**

The Source Protection Plan may require persons engaged in these activities to have a Risk Management Plan that details all of the actions that must be taken to ensure that the activity does not pose a risk to the drinking water source. The requirement of a Risk Management Plan is intended to allow activities to continue while minimizing the risk to the municipal drinking water source.

Risk Management Plans are intended to take into account the specific conditions at your facility. In some cases, you may already be adequately managing the risk through procedures that are in place. In this case, the Risk Management Plan will simply formalize the actions that you are already taking. In other cases, additional best management practices may be required to reduce the risk to the drinking water source.

The Town of Wasaga Beach is currently in the process of developing templates and other resources to simplify the process for preparing and submitting a Risk Management Plan. We will work with you to ensure that your Risk Management Plan is reasonable while meeting the requirements of the Source Protection Plan.

### **Are these inspections mandatory?**

The Clean Water Act gives municipalities the legal obligation to enforce the Source Protection Plan policies. Risk Management Inspectors have legislated powers to enter property to perform their duties of inspection and enforcement.

Our goal is to work cooperatively with local businesses so that any inconvenience is minimized. We will call you in advance to set an inspection time that works with your schedule.

### **What happens after the inspection?**

We will notify you of the results by letter. If a Risk Management Plan is required, you will be given further information about how to proceed and a timeline for submitting and establishing your plan.

### **What is the inspector looking for?**

The location of your business relative to the municipal drinking water sources will determine which activities may potentially be significant drinking water threats. For businesses that are within 100 metres of a municipal water supply well, there are a number of activities that may be considered significant drinking water threats, including the following:

- Chemical handling and storage
- Fuel handling and storage
- Storage of hazardous or liquid industrial waste
- Application of road salt
- Septic systems
- Pesticide or fertilizer storage

For businesses that are not within 100 metres of a well, there is only one activity that may be considered a significant drinking water threat:

- Handling or Storage of a Dense Non-aqueous Phase Liquid (DNAPL).

### **What is a DNAPL?**

DNAPLs are liquid chemicals that have a higher density than water and do not completely dissolve in water. Because of these properties, they remain as a distinct liquid in surface or groundwater and sink deep into the ground. They can then contaminate groundwater sources. Some examples of common products that may contain DNAPLs are listed below:

- Paints, stains, and metal coatings
- Paint removers and furniture strippers
- Wood treatment products
- Spot removers and dry cleaning solvent
- Adhesives, batteries, and printing inks
- Metal cleaning and degreasing products

It is very costly and difficult to clean up DNAPLs once they have contaminated a groundwater source. Even small amounts can cause serious health issues for humans and the environment. Because of this, DNAPLs are considered a significant threat at greater distances from wells than some other chemical threats, even in small quantities.

The best way to protect drinking water is to make sure that DNAPLs don't get there in the first place.

### **What can businesses do to help protect our drinking water sources?**

#### Consider alternative products

There may be a less hazardous product that can be used to achieve the same result. Eliminating the risk entirely is the most effective approach.

#### Ensure chemicals are stored safely

Chemicals should be stored in a location that is protected from collisions with vehicles or other equipment or any other hazard that may result in a spill.

#### Train staff to prevent spills

Staff should be trained to prevent spills and use procedures to ensure that hazardous chemicals do not make it into the ground, sewer systems, or watercourses.

#### Plan to respond to spills

Having the right equipment, such as absorbent materials, to clean up spills can ensure that spilled chemicals do not have a chance to enter drinking water sources. Staff should know where these materials are and how to use them.

#### Dispose of chemicals properly

Chemical waste should be stored securely and disposed of by an approved carrier of hazardous or liquid industrial waste.

### **Where can I get more information?**

For general information about Source Water Protection in our Region, visit the South Georgian Bay Lake Simcoe Source Protection Region website at [www.ourwatershed.ca](http://www.ourwatershed.ca)

If you have questions about inspections, please contact

**Patti Kennedy, Risk Management Inspector.**

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