

# Funding on the Line for Well Aware Program

Written by Sharyn Inward, Green Communities

By now you may recognize the Well Aware logo from seeing it on a poster or booklet in your community. Well Aware encourages Ontario's well owners to protect their wells and our common groundwater supplies. The program is a project of The Green Communities Association in partnership with the Ontario Ground Water Association.

Well Aware has distributed more than 85,000 booklets, conducted community outreach and guided self-assessments in five communities and hosted forums and workshops in 27 communities. You may have picked up a booklet yourself, or gone to a community forum.

The response to this program has been overwhelming. It is due to the cooperation of the many organizations and agencies, like your own, that provide information to rural homeowners. Many people have come together to provide consistent accurate information to well owners.

The main messages being:

- Protect the groundwater source. Prevent contamination risks by handling and storing common contaminants at a safe and secure distance from your well. These include pet/livestock wastes, chemicals, fertilizers, fuels, etc.
- Test your water three times a year. The best time is after a heavy rain because that's when your well is at highest risk of becoming contaminated.
- Maintain your well. Inspect it often and have it repaired or upgraded when necessary.
- Always hire a licensed contractor to work on your well. They are trained and skilled at protecting your drinking water safety. Don't try to do it-yourself.
- Have your un-used wells properly plugged and sealed. A well that is no longer used or maintained can become a direct pipeline for contaminated run-off to reach the aquifer.

Funding support for Well Aware was initially provided by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. Unfortunately the current Ministry has not yet committed to re-funding this vital program that is essential to protecting well water and your family's health. It is important now to make sure the Minister has a clear understanding from people like yourselves that Well Aware is important and needs to be continued. Please ask your Women's Institute to send a letter of support for the program directly to the Minister.

To write to the Minister of the Environment:

The Honourable Leona Dombrowsky,  
Minister of the Environment

12th Floor, 135 St. Clair Avenue West,  
Toronto, Ontario, M4V 1P5  
Fax: (416) 314-7337



For more information about Well Aware visit:  
[www.wellaware.ca](http://www.wellaware.ca)

## Toolbox

Planning a Session? As I have traveled across the province for the ROSE Program workshops I have been assembling a long list of program ideas and suggestions. Here is a preview of some of your suggestions!



- Cooking Lessons ranging from Beginner Basics, Crock Pot Cooking to "International Cuisine"
- Antiques Roadshow – appraise and access local antiques and learn their history
- Bone China Tea – Featuring Osteoporosis Society of Canada's Program, feature your local bone china at an osteoporosis education event
- "Fashion Show through the Ages" detailing trends over the past 100 years
- Financial Planning Workshop including topics such as; planning for your future, retirement living, estate planning and understanding government programs
- Horticultural therapy course
- Knitting/Quilting/Sewing courses for youth
- "Home Show" complete with demonstrations and local merchants
- Yoga, line dancing, belly dancing or tai chi course at your local Community Hall
- Information evening on Water Safety or Wind Generated Energy
- Scrapbooking Course using Tweedsmuir information
- Women's Day complete with a ladies luncheon
- Alternative Therapies and how to understand and safely use them
- Computer basics course

