

But Region says lake-based water will be needed to meet Georgetown's future demands

P.O.W.E.R. rep tells council groundwater system can accommodate future growth

By **CHRISTINA COMMISSO**
Metroland Media Group

The demand is great for groundwater in north Halton but the Region says as the population grows lake-based water will have to pick up the slack.

Carol Gustafson of Milton and Halton Hills resident Leslie Adams want to keep groundwater flowing from their taps instead of Lake Ontario-based water, which serves most of Halton.

Last week council endorsed the Region's water and wastewater master plans that includes upgrades to water purification plants, new pumping stations and well upgrades.

However, both Gustafson and Adams want to ensure the preservation of Halton's groundwater is included in the plans.

"A recent petition indicated the majority of residents surveyed (in Milton) desired to keep the well-based system," said Gustafson during last week's council meeting.

Earlier this year, a group of Miltonians raised concerns about the Region possibly switching the Timberlea and Dorset Park neighbourhoods to lake-based water as the areas intensify.

The master plans ensure all old Milton neighbourhoods currently serviced by groundwater will continue to be so, while the hospital and employment areas will switch to lake water.

Adams, who was at the council meeting on behalf of environmental group Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources (P.O.W.E.R.), said through water conservation initiatives the Town could service the new households expected to come to Georgetown in the coming years without having to bring lake water to

the municipality.

"Moving toward sustainability, a crucial element is that water efficiency and conservation are considered," said Adams. "Since the beginning of the development of water service for Halton Hills, P.O.W.E.R. has not supported lake-based services. We have not opposed the 20,000 people coming to Halton Hills and do recognize that water servicing is needed for the future population. However, through efficiency measures we do believe that most of population expected from 2021 and 2031 can be accommodated through efficiencies in the groundwater system, saving millions and moving Halton Hills to a state where its ecological footprint is more sustainable."

But Regional planning staff said that if every toilet, showerhead, appliance and humidifier in Georgetown were switched to water efficient models, it still wouldn't generate enough water savings to eliminate the need for Lake Ontario water.

The Region's Commissioner of Public Works Mitch Zamojc said water treatment plants need to be designed to support peak flow water, employment needs must be considered and the chance of a water main break or leak need to be

factored into the water demand calculation, which leads to an increase.

"On that basis we can not accommodate the need in Halton Hills with groundwater supply," he said, adding that Georgetown's population is forecasted to grow by 32,000 residents and 3,500 employees by 2031.

Zamojc said the Region is trying to curb water usage in Halton. The average family of four in Halton uses about 1,000 litres of water per day.

"It's a figure we're working on through conservation and we're trying to lower that figure through efficiencies," said Zamojc.



LESLIE ADAMS



MITCH ZAMOJC

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