

# Water protection plan should be funded by Province: committee

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*Metroland Media Group*

A Regional committee wants the Province to cover any costs that could arise from a new water protection plan.

Wednesday, Halton's planning and public works committee reviewed an update on the Source Water Protection (SWP) policy that aims to safeguard the region's drinking water through new legislation.

Milton Councillor Colin Best put forward a motion that would see the Ministry of the Environment fund all costs that municipalities could incur as a result of the SWP plan. The motion was passed by the committee and was to be considered by regional council yesterday (Wednesday).

"This is a provincial initiative. If they want this system, they should pay for it. We have a great system," said Best.

Halton Hills Mayor Rick Bonnette echoed the same sentiments.

"I could see this as another layer of government. When you hear some of the things they're looking at, there may be restrictions on land use policies. If I'm a landowner or farmer, I'd be very concerned. I think this is going to be nothing more than a boondoggle by the time it comes out, as we're looking at more and more policies."

The SWP plans are a result of the Walkerton drinking water crisis. Following an inquiry, the Province implemented the Clean Water Act that includes the creation of SWP committees and policies.

More than 900 residents in the Halton/Hamilton area received letters this summer explaining

## Town nets award

Despite being one of the newest members of Metrolinx's Smart Commute program, the Town of Halton Hills has received an award for being Employer of Year in Halton region.

The Town is considered one of the most successful Smart Commute partners, with 34 per cent of its employees joining the Carpool Zone, a carpool matching service in the first six months. To date, 53 per cent of those have been matched.

The Town has installed secured bike lockers and is exploring ways to encourage cycling through programs such as bike sharing.

The Town was one of 11 employers in the GTA and Hamilton area recognized in 2011.

how the committee is developing policies to protect drinking water and how those policies could affect current and future activities on their properties.

One example of a water threat is private septic system

located close to a well.

Halton's representative on the committee, and former Milton regional councillor, Barry Lee sent a letter to the committee regarding the potential costs associated with the new regula-

tions.

"I am concerned that this source water protection exercise is failing to recognize the importance of work already done by provincial, federal and other agencies, as well as asso-

ciated legislation," he wrote. "...I would encourage you to engage AMO to put your concerns forward. Otherwise there is a great risk of this proposed legislation being rubber stamped and we will all face the consequences."



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