

# Whose water is it anyway?

By DONNA DANIELLI

Much progress was made this year in the City of Guelph's proposal to increase water taking at the Arkell Spring Grounds Municipal Well. The proposal to increase the well field capacity by 6.4 cubic metres per minute from 13.6 cubic metres to 20 cubic metres raised concerns at the end of 2003 for Puslinch and North Halton residents. Over fifty people crowded into a public meeting to have their say on the proposal which would see an additional two wells built at the site, alongside the three existing wells.

At issue is the potential impact of the proposal on residential wells, as well as providing for the potential future water requirements of the residents whose homes surround Guelph, and the potential future land constraints the new wells could have on surrounding properties.

The City of Guelph addressed the concerns raised in a technical review that was received by the Region of Halton in February. The technical review included a complaint process for investigating well interference complaints and insisted on a "timely response to well complaints that includes an immediate provision water supply without question, if the complaint is within an area where the monitoring program has detected drawdown as a result of pumping." Halton Region also recommended the establishment of a well complaint committee that includes Halton staff and residents, to be responsible for the arbitration of complaints.

In May, the Town of Milton received the Environmental Assessment on the proposal, as part of the Water Supply Strategy to identify the impacts of increasing the wellfield. Town of Milton staff recommended that Council endorse the decision by Halton Regional Council to support the Environmental Assessment, but Milton Town Council chose to disregard that recommendation. The Council chose instead, to receive the Environmental Assessment for information purposes only. This change in motion allowed the proposal process to continue but under tighter parameters. "In order to get answers, we really need the process to continue," Director of Planning and Development Mel Iovio told the Council. "We need to get to the next step to get these issues answered."

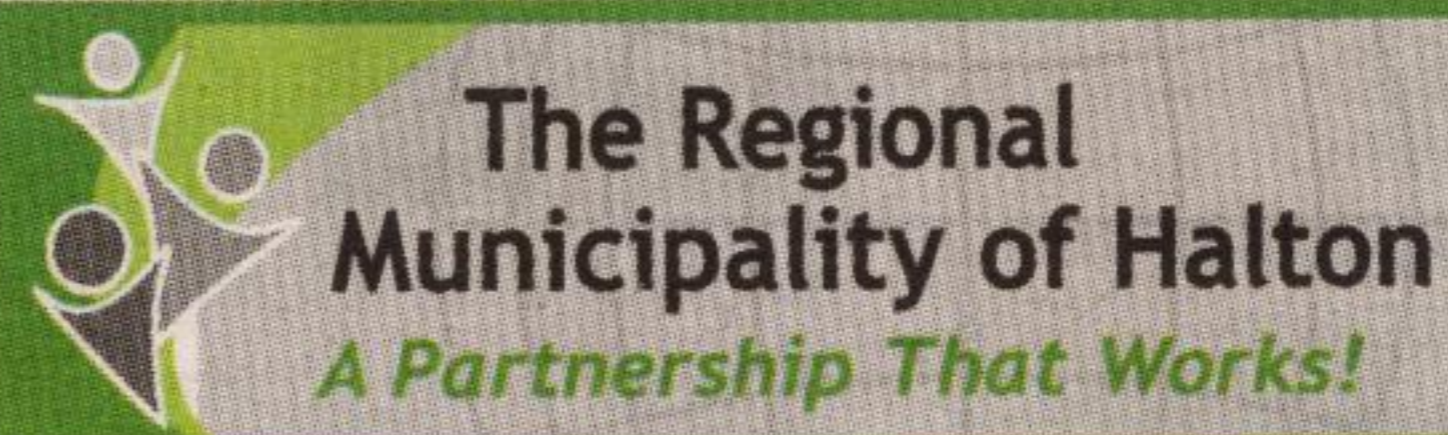

In July, Puslinch jumped into the fray, filing a formal objection to the proposal with the Ministry of the Environment. The objection came in response to a report from Harden Environmental Services Ltd., a firm hired by Puslinch to review the Environmental Assessment. When Harden examined the testing process used to assess the potential impact of the increased water taking on the Eramosa River and the Blue Springs Creek, it concluded, "pumping tests were not conducted properly. During the testing process, the discharge water from the wells was discharged onto the ground surface and allowed infiltrate or run off into the Eramosa River.

This negates the ability of the pumping test to determine if the water taking has a measurable impact."

The study also accused the Environmental Assessment of failing to address the issue of cumulative water taking by Guelph and expressed concerns about what it called "fundamental flaws in the Environmental Assessment."

In response, the City of Guelph countered with a letter to the township stating that it would no longer participate in negotiations with them, choosing instead to proceed with the project by turning the water study over to the Ministry of the Environment.

Late in 2004, the city of Guelph moved forward with its Water Supply Master Plan, intended to identify additional sources of water to supplement the existing supply. It has also implemented a water conservation/demand management program, along with the proposal to increase capacity from the Arkell Spring Grounds site. A Public Advisory Committee is in the process of being formed, consisting of three Guelph residents, and 1 resident from each of the neighbouring municipalities, Milton, Puslinch and Guelph/Eramosa. Opportunities for public input, including public meetings, workshops and open houses are expected to occur in the next few months.

**THE REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF HALTON AND  
THE TOWN OF HALTON HILLS  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE #3**


**Maple Avenue (Regional Road 11) Improvements  
Trafalgar Road (Regional Road 3) to Mountainview Road,  
Town of Halton Hills (Georgetown)  
Class Environmental Assessment Study, Schedule "B"**

The Region of Halton is conducting a study with the Town of Halton Hills to look at what can be done to improve the safety, operation and appearance of Maple Avenue (Regional Road 11) between Trafalgar Road (Regional Road 3) and Mountainview Road in Georgetown (refer to map).

The study is being conducted in compliance with Schedule "B" of the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment Document.

The Maple Avenue (Regional Road 11) Class EA Study is examining ways to:

- Improve the existing pavement and driving surface
- Enhance the safety for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers
- Improve traffic operations and roadway efficiency
- Improve the appearance of the corridor.



The map above shows the approximate limits of the study area.

Following recent Council direction, a bicycle path/multi-use pathway is being proposed to enhance the safety of cyclists along Maple Avenue from Trafalgar Road to Mountainview Road. To accommodate the cycle path/multi-use pathway, revisions have been made to the recommended design presented at the June 24, 2004 Public Information Centre (PIC). These revisions include changes to the sidewalk and boulevard layouts. Additional minor amendments have also been made to the other study recommendations presented at the same PIC.

An additional Public Information Centre has been scheduled to provide the public with an opportunity to review and comment on the revised design. Public comments obtained from the PIC will be incorporated into the final preliminary design and study documentation. Following this PIC, a Project File will be completed and made available for review by the public for a thirty (30) day review period. You are invited to attend this PIC scheduled for:


Wednesday, January 12, 2005  
6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. (Presentation at 7:00 p.m.)  
Town of Halton Hills Council Chambers, 1 Halton Hills Drive, Georgetown

If you are unable to attend the PIC but would like to obtain further details about the project or provide further comments, you may contact one of the individuals below.


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Happy, Healthy &  
Prosperous New Year!