

No Meters on Wells

Despite rumors to the contrary, Quinte Conservation has no plans to install meters on private residential wells and does not support this idea.

"There is no mention of metering private wells in the proposed Clean Water Act," states Keith Taylor, Source Water Protection Project Manager with Quinte Conservation. "The intent of the proposed Clean Water Act is to protect our sources of drinking water."

The rumour about meters on wells has been circulating for some time. Last December 14, Laurel Broten, Minister of the Environment responded to a question in the legislature regarding this issue. "As I indicated during broad consultations across the province, we made it clear then, and I want to repeat it now, that our government has no interest in installing meters on private residential wells. We do want to ensure that all Ontarians across the province have clean, plentiful and safe drinking water and that's what the Clean Water Act is all about."

The unfounded rumour still persists locally however, and Taylor reports fielding numerous calls from concerned citizens. It has also come up at recent public presentations where source water protection and the Clean Water Act were discussed.

Following the tragedy at Walkerton in May 2000, legislation was developed with input from many sectors including municipalities, the farming community and Ontario's Conservation Authorities. Second reading of the proposed Clean Water Act began in April 2006.

Conservation Authorities, including Quinte Conservation, have begun collecting and assessing scientific data that will be required to develop a plan to protect local sources of drinking water.

Under the proposed Clean Water Act, municipalities, Conservation Authorities, landowners, industry, businesses, farmers, community groups and the public would collaborate to develop workable, effective plans to address local risks to drinking water. These plans will be based on relevant scientific information and will therefore suit the needs of the local community.

"Source water protection plans will be developed regionally. A local committee will be creating the plan with input from all sectors and the public. Although the plan will be science-based it will have to be economically feasible and broadly supported by our watershed community," says Taylor.

"Quinte Conservation has a long history of working with landowners, farmers and municipalities in a mutually acceptable and respectful way and that is not

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going to change."

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