

New program to assist rural landowners with source water protection

The provincial government recently announced \$5 million to protect municipal drinking water sources and a further \$2 million to go towards supporting education and outreach related to source water protection planning. A new government program has been developed to assist farmers and non-farm landowners to protect sources of drinking water in parts of rural Ontario.

"This new program, with its initial funding levels, is a good step in the right direction," said Ken Schmidt, General Manager of the Essex Region Conservation Authority (ERCA). "In meeting with partner municipalities and stakeholder

groups on the topic of source water protection, farmers and other rural residents have been loud and clear in their request for assistance. This announcement identifies the recognized importance of sharing the responsibility of protecting our sources of drinking water."

Conservation Authorities across Ontario have been developing and delivering a variety of watershed stewardship programs in partnership with other local agencies and municipalities for many years. They currently deliver approximately \$20 million in watershed stewardship funding towards projects that protect rural water quality and quantity,

create healthy fish and wildlife habitat and controls or prevents erosion and flooding. Watershed stewardship programs can help avoid expensive water treatment costs by keeping our drinking water sources as clean as possible before they enter private treatment systems.

ERCA already works with many farmers and rural landowners to provide technical and financial assistance for water quality improvement projects such as buffer strips, rock chutes, septic upgrades and tree planting and restoration. To learn more about accessing this existing assistance, contact ERCA at 776-5209 ext. 369.

Agricultural Technologies Inc. honoured

BY BILL GAY

Exemplary service deserves recognition. Thus, civic leaders, growers and industry representatives gathered Oct. 13 to honour the Posthumus family who have made their company, Agriculture Technologies Inc., the leader in recycling greenhouse wastes

throughout North America. ATI, located on County Road 34 between Cottam and Ruthven, was presented with an award from Agro-Dynamics for its dedication to its customers and its innovativeness in recycling techniques.

Receiving the award, ATI President Steve Posthumus praised the

members of his family who have worked side by side to get ATI to the place it occupies in the agri-business world today. He took particular pride in pointing out that environmentally friendly ATI techniques help to keep greenhouse by-products out of local landfills.

ATI President Steve Posthumus, left, accepts the supplier award for excellence from Chris Marshall of Agro-Dynamics. ATI has developed processes that have dramatically changed recycling practices in greenhouses and the reuse of Rockwool.



Photo: Anne Miskovsky

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