

# Towns welcome septic funding

From page 3.

In King Township, there are at least 5,000 septic systems in trouble, said Brian Grubbe, the municipality's director of operations. With tributaries of the Humber River running through King, the condition of the septic systems is most worrying.

TRCA's Rural Clean Water Program is available to rural landowners who wish to reduce the amount of pollution leaving their properties and entering water courses, said Elaine Barkley, the program administrator. "Some of the sources of pollution are faulty septic systems, improper manure management practices, improper disposal of milk-house wash water from dairy operations, livestock with access to water-courses and soil erosion," she said.

Town of Georgina officials are encouraging property owners to take advantage of the LSRCA's program. The northern York Region municipality with a population of 40,000 has about 10,000 private septic systems. "Most are inadequate or failed. I'd estimate between 6,000 to 7,000 are in trouble," said Deborah Buck, Georgina's chief building official.

It's estimated Markham has 2,000 private septic systems in the rural areas. "Some are faulty," said John Wright, Markham's director of building standards. "Residents living in urban areas can flush and forget it, while those in rural areas can't do that," Mr. Wright said. "People living on rural properties must assume complete responsibility for their sewage disposal."

Markham's Toogood and Milne ponds have experienced some pollution problems. The environmental trouble, however, stems from surface water and not from sewage, stressed Mr. Wright.

LSRCA watershed biologist and program administrator Andrea Gynan pointed out the water quality improvement program deals with conventional tank and weeping beds, sand and wood chip filters, peat-based leaching beds, effluent filter systems (including artificial media filters and raised beds) and sand filter systems. The purpose of the program is "to protect ground and surface water resources by repairing or replacing faulty or malfunctioning septic systems," Ms Gynan said.

**"Residents living in urban areas can flush and forget it, while those in rural areas can't do that"**

—John Wright, Town of Markham

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