

MARCH 2015

## Source Protection Plan Implementation for Real Estate Professionals

We need reliable supplies of clean, safe drinking water now and for our future. Yet, some of our activities, when carried out near a drinking water source, can contaminate and deplete that water source. To protect our sources of municipal drinking water, Ontario passed the *Clean Water Act* in 2006. Under the Act, 19 regions in Ontario have created plans to protect sources of municipal drinking water. Plans were developed by local committees, based on science, and included broad public consultation.

The Approved Quinte Region Source Protection Plan requires that existing and/or future activities do not adversely affect our local municipal water sources. The Plan contains 63 policies to address the 21 provincially identified drinking water threats. It came into effect on January 1, 2015.

### Why should real estate professionals care about drinking water source protection?

Many potential home, farm, and business buyers are now aware that certain properties located near our municipal drinking water sources may have some regulated activities. You will receive questions from buyers about whether or not a property is located in a 'vulnerable area' and how this might impact the activities they can undertake if they purchase the property. It is in everyone's best interest for potential buyers to have the most accurate information available. In the Quinte Region, (map on last page) this information is available from Quinte Conservation and at [quintesourcewater.ca](http://quintesourcewater.ca). (Property and business owners (sellers) should already be aware of regulated activities.)

### Why Protect Source Water?

- ◆ to protect public health
- ◆ to avoid the cost and need to clean up contaminated water
- ◆ to reduce the cost of water treatment
- ◆ to eliminate the need to search for new drinking water sources when existing ones become contaminated or depleted
- ◆ to ensure a long-term supply of clean water
- ◆ to ensure an adequate supply for economic growth

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Quinte  
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## What is a significant drinking water threat activity?

Activities on the land and in the water can impact our municipal drinking water sources. Significant threat activities may be present or planned future activities that take place near the water source.

The Province of Ontario identified 21 drinking water threats under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*. Policies in the Source Protection Plan address these threats where they are determined to be significant. The most numerous significant threats to drinking water sources in the Quinte Region are the handling and storage of fuel and the operation of septic systems.

See the “21 Drinking Water Threats” fact sheet at:  
[quintesourcewater.ca](http://quintesourcewater.ca).

Click on ‘Drinking Water Threats’ under ‘Protecting Water’.

## What types of activities are affected by Source Protection Plan policies?

Policies in the Plan address activities that do or could occur near the water sources. The Plan sets out both voluntary and mandatory policies that encourage good stewardship, require additional care or risk reduction measures where necessary, and in limited circumstances, prohibit certain activities. A few examples of activities that could pose a significant threat when undertaken close to a water source are:

### Residential:

- ◆ handling and storage of home heating oil
- ◆ operation of a septic system

### Agricultural:

- ◆ manure handling, storage and spreading
- ◆ use of pesticides and fertilizers
- ◆ pasturing and grazing

### Commercial /Industrial:

- ◆ handling and storage of dry cleaning chemicals
- ◆ storage of waste oil
- ◆ use of degreasing agents
- ◆ storage and handling of fuel (gasoline)



*The Building Code requires that septic systems in some vulnerable areas be inspected every five years.*

## What does it mean if a ‘threat’ has been identified on a property that is for sale?

It means that there is a potential threat to the safety of the municipal drinking water source and that policies in the Source Protection Plan may apply. Landowners were contacted during Plan development and should already be aware of any threat activities on their property.

The identification of a threat does not necessarily mean there is an immediate risk to drinking water on a property. The threat will be one of the 21 identified activities which can, if not properly managed, pose a risk to municipal drinking water sources. Policies in the Source Protection Plan set out how the water source will be protected from the threat and whether or not additional measures are necessary.

Some threat activities will require additional risk reduction measures and so a risk management plan will be in place. These plans are not typically transferrable from one owner/operator to another and so a new risk management plan must be negotiated when properties or businesses change hands. The Risk Management Office at Quinte Conservation can provide more information or see ‘Risk Management’ at [quintesourcewater.ca](http://quintesourcewater.ca).



*The Quinte Region Source Protection Plan prohibits spreading manure within 100 metres of a municipal well.*



## What are sources of drinking water?

In the Quinte Region, municipalities obtain water for municipal distribution and public use from both groundwater and surface water sources.

- ◆ **Groundwater** is drawn from **wells** drilled into an underlying aquifer, which is the water source.
- ◆ **Surface water** sources include lakes, rivers and bays such as the Bay of Quinte, Lake Ontario, Roblin Lake and the Napanee River. Surface water is drawn through **intakes** (pipes) in the surface water.

## Drinking Water Systems in Quinte Region

Eleven municipal drinking water systems in the Quinte Region serve about 50 % of the population\* or about 60,000 people. The identified vulnerable areas surrounding these water sources are where policies in the source protection plan may apply.

Maps of the vulnerable areas surrounding these drinking water systems are available at [quintesourcewater.ca](http://quintesourcewater.ca).

Note that the vulnerable areas for the Village of Madoc wells extend from the Municipality of Centre Hastings into the Township of Madoc. Policies to protect that drinking water source apply in both municipalities.

\* The other 50 % obtain water from private wells using groundwater; in some cases surface water from shore wells; or for some cottages, directly from a river or lake. Information about maintaining wells and septic systems is available at [quintesourcewater.ca](http://quintesourcewater.ca).

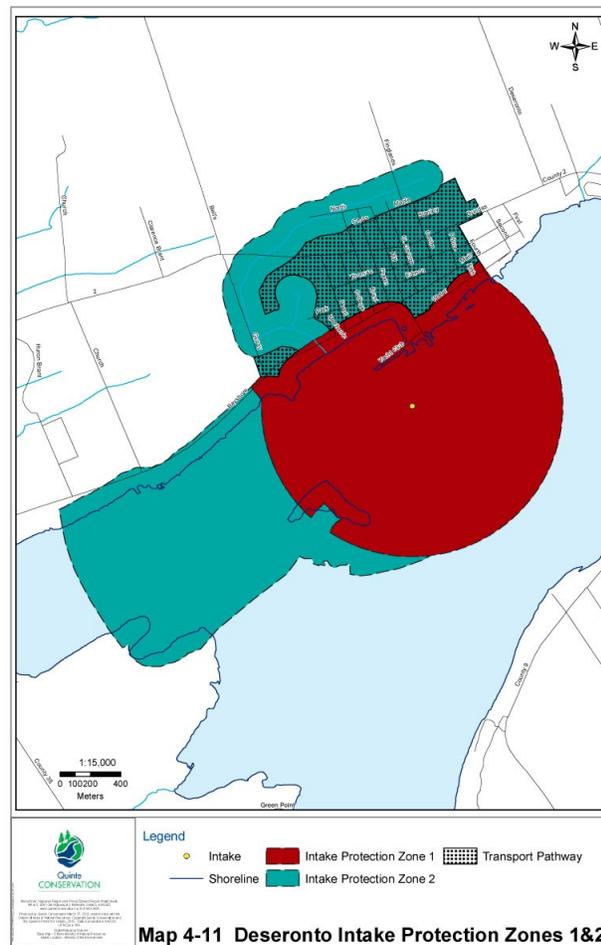
## 11 Municipal Drinking Water Systems

### Groundwater Wells: (municipality)

- ◆ Village of Deloro (Marmora and Lake)
- ◆ Village of Madoc (Centre Hastings and Madoc Township)
- ◆ Village of Tweed (Tweed)
- ◆ Peats Point (Prince Edward County)

### Surface Water Intakes: (municipality)

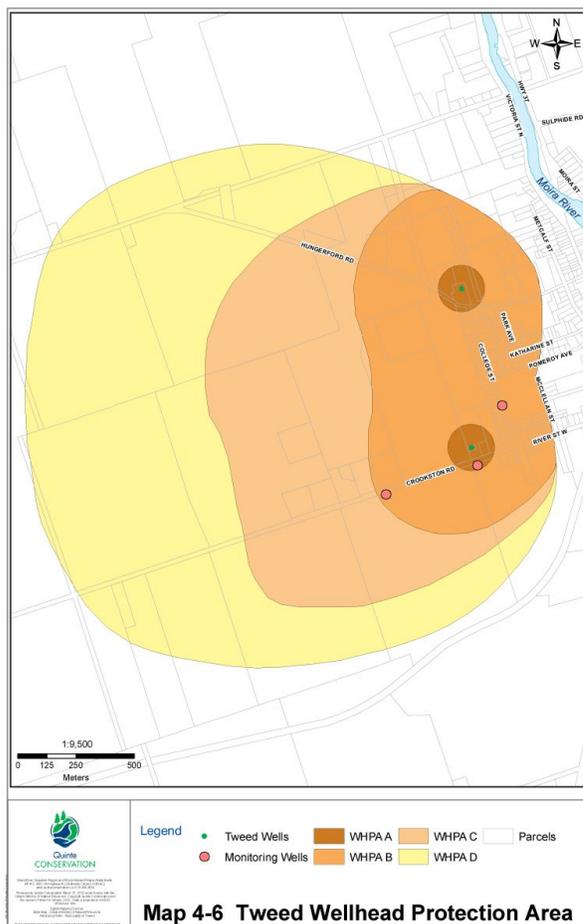
- ◆ City of Belleville (Belleville)
- ◆ Hamlet of Point Anne (Belleville)
- ◆ Town of Deseronto (Deseronto)
- ◆ Town of Picton (Prince Edward County)
- ◆ Village of Ameliasburgh (Prince Edward County)
- ◆ Village of Wellington (Prince Edward County)
- ◆ Napanee Backup water supply (Greater Napanee)



## What are the vulnerable areas surrounding drinking water systems in the Quinte Region?

**Wellhead Protection Areas:** These are the areas above and below ground, surrounding a municipal well through which pollutants may move toward and reach the well. Activities in these areas have the potential to affect the quality of the water supplying the well.

**Intake Protection Zones:** These are the areas of land and water, that may be vulnerable to contamination, surrounding municipal intake pipes. Surface water (water from lakes, rivers and bays) is drawn in through the intake, or pipe, placed in the water body.



Maps of vulnerable areas are available at [quintesourcewater.ca](http://quintesourcewater.ca)

## Where does the Source Protection Plan apply?

The Quinte Source Protection Region, is based on the jurisdiction of Quinte Conservation (page 8). It includes the watersheds of the Moira, Napanee and Salmon Rivers and all of Prince Edward County; an area of about 6,200 square kilometres, with about 117,000 people.

**Most of the policies in the Plan apply in relatively small and very specific mapped vulnerable areas surrounding each municipal drinking water source. Not all policies apply in all areas. Each policy states specific applicable areas. Less than 1% of the total area of the Quinte Region is affected by policies that address significant drinking water threat activities.**

**Check the Policy Information Maps and related fact sheets at: [quintesourcewater.ca](http://quintesourcewater.ca)**

### **Is the property within the vulnerable area of a drinking water system?**

If so, there are policies that may apply that affect activities on this property. You and/or your client can check the Policy Information Maps at [quintesourcewater.ca](http://quintesourcewater.ca) and/or call the Risk Management Office at Quinte Conservation for more information.

### **Is there potential for development, construction or related application on this property?**

If so, your client will want to check with the Risk Management Office at Quinte Conservation about proposing a new use, business or for construction on the property. Some activities will require risk reduction measures (a risk management plan) or may even be prohibited. For some activities in specific vulnerable areas, applications under the Planning Act, or for the construction or the change of the use of a building may not be made until the risk management official issues a notice to the person who is proposing the regulated activity.

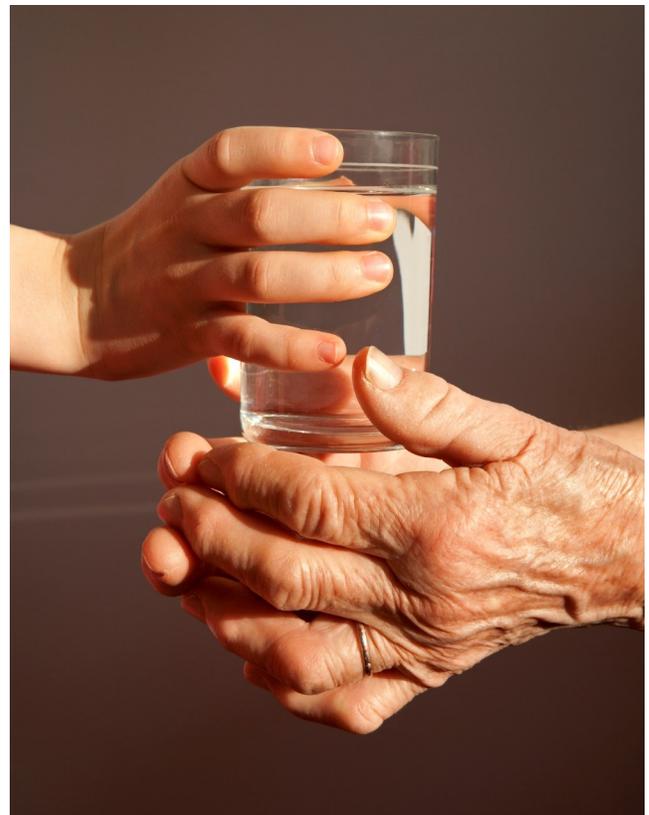
The notice will identify either that:

- ◆ the activity is prohibited or
- ◆ that a risk management plan has been agreed to or established for the activity or
- ◆ neither prohibition or risk management measures apply.

If the activity is prohibited then the application cannot proceed. If the activity requires a risk management plan, then the plan must be established before the application can proceed. If neither prohibition or risk management measures apply then the application may proceed.

### **Is the property in an area where septic system inspections are required every five years?**

The Ontario Building Code now requires that septic systems in the most vulnerable areas surrounding municipal drinking water sources be inspected every five years. In the Quinte Region these inspections are carried out by municipal staff in the applicable vulnerable areas surrounding the drinking water sources for Picton, Point Anne, Peats Point and the Villages of Deloro, Madoc, Tweed and Ameliasburgh.



*We all have a role to play in protecting our sources of drinking water to ensure a healthy and prosperous future for our communities. Real estate professionals can be part of helping to protect this vital and valuable resource.*

## What if I sell and list properties in more than one region? Will source protection plans for other areas have the same policies?

No, but they will likely be similar. The source protection program was designed to address local needs and so there will be some variability in approaches taken by each of the local source protection committees in creating their local plans. Each source protection region/area in Ontario has a website with more information and maps. Go to [conservation-ontario.ca](http://conservation-ontario.ca) and click on 'drinking water source protection' for links to information across Ontario.

## What can I do to help inform potential buyers and sellers about drinking water source protection and how it applies to them?

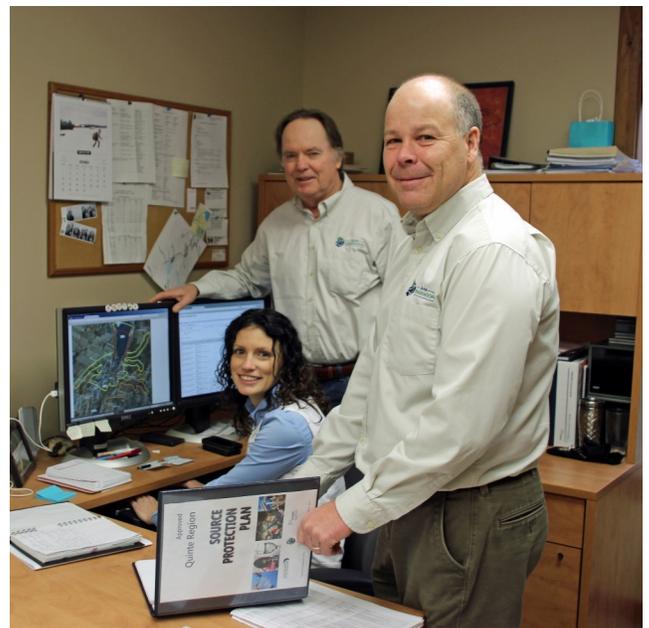
Find out if Source Protection Plan policies apply in the communities you serve and become familiar with the maps of the vulnerable areas. Visit and encourage your clients to visit [quintesourcewater.ca](http://quintesourcewater.ca) to view the maps and helpful fact sheets. Information is also available at the Quinte Conservation office to better inform you and your clients about:

- ◆ which properties are located in a vulnerable area, and
- ◆ how specific activities may be regulated in certain locations, and
- ◆ how some activities will require risk management plans or may be prohibited.

Scheduling an appointment with Quinte Conservation to discuss concerns is advisable.

## Quinte Conservation Risk Management Office

Quinte Conservation provides the risk management services for municipalities with drinking water systems in the Quinte Region. Risk Management Officials are fully certified and carry provincial identification.



**Contact us at:**  
**QUINTE CONSERVATION**  
**613-968-3434 or 613-354-3312**

<b>Keith Taylor</b>	ext. 114
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Or visit the office during business hours:  
**2061 Old Highway 2 near Belleville**  
(appointment recommended)

This fact sheet is not legal advice.

