



TOWN OF MINTO

MEETING DATE: March 19, 2024
REPORT TO: Mayor and Council
SERVICE AREA: Public Works
SUBJECT: PW 2024-006 - 2023 Source Protection Annual Report

RECOMMENDATIONS:

THAT Council of the Town of Minto receive report PW 2024-006 regarding the 2023 Source Water Protection Annual Report as information.

BACKGROUND:

For reporting purposes, the Town of Minto is subject to two Source Protection Plans (based on watershed or Conservation Authority boundaries): Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley(ABMV) Plan and the Saugeen Valley, Grey Sauble, Northern Bruce Peninsula Plan (Saugeen). In 2023, all Source Protection Plans were in effect.

Under Section 81 of the Clean Water Act and Section 65 of O. Reg. 287/07, an annual report must be prepared by a Risk Management Official and submitted to the appropriate Source Protection Authority (Conservation Authority) by February 1st of each year. Under Section 45 of the *Clean Water Act*, a public body, including a municipality, must comply with monitoring and reporting policies designated by a Source Protection Plan. This includes the submittal of an annual municipal report by February 1st of each year. Risk Management staff submitted both reports, as required, by the statutory deadline for the Town.

COMMENTS:

Development Review

In 2023, there were 43 development applications (notices and comments) reviewed in the municipality. There were 3 review notices issued per Section 59 of the Clean Water Act within the municipality and staff comments were provided on an additional 40 applications that did not require development review notices. There were 93 Section 59 notices issued County wide and Source Protection staff comments on 390 additional development applications, County wide, for a total of 483 development applications (notices and comments) reviewed County wide in 2023. This represents an increase in the total number of development applications (notices and comments) reviewed County wide from 2022 (425) and an increase compared to the five year average of 366 development applications (notices and comments).

For the municipality, 2023 also represents an increase in the number of development notices issued and in comments from the five year average of 29 development applications (notices and comments). In addition to the notices and comments provided, other

applications were screened out by building or planning staff following Risk Management Official Written Direction provided by Wellington Source Water Protection.

Policy and Technical Updates

In 2022, all five Source Protection Plans within the County were at different stages of amendments. Staff reviewed, provided comments and in some cases assisted Conservation Authority staff in authoring portions of the various amendments. Staff also provided support to the County's Official Plan Municipal Comprehensive Review, provided support to a number of water supply and / or water supply master plan projects related to water systems within or adjacent to the County, were involved in technical studies related to wellhead protection area updates and location of new municipal wells. Within the Town, this included providing support towards the well exploration for Harriston and Palmerston and the new well at Minto Pines.

In 2023, the Maitland Valley Source Protection Plan was amended and submitted to the Province for review and approval. Approval is anticipated in 2024. The approval of the amended Plan will result in additional winter maintenance activities requiring Risk Management Plans.

Threat Verification and Inspections

Analysis continued on the threat verification data collected in previous years on residential, agricultural, industrial, commercial and institutional activities identified as potential significant drinking water threats in the approved Assessment Reports. Staff complete a variety of tasks to remove or confirm and then mitigate activities identified as potential significant drinking water threats in the approved Assessment Reports. These threat activities are existing and the analysis can involve desk top interpretation of air photos or GIS data, phone calls, review of municipal records, windshield surveys, site inspections by Risk Management staff and if confirmed, then mitigation through septic inspection, prohibition and / or negotiation of risk management plans.

As a result of this analysis, staff currently estimate approximately 17% of threat activities in the municipality still require action to either remove or confirm / mitigate the threat activities while 83% have been either removed or confirmed and mitigated. Note that the percentages are weighted equally between Source Protection Authorities to provide an overall municipal percentage.

To support this threats analysis and to determine compliance, 48 inspections were conducted in the municipality in 2023 with 12 for compliance purposes (prohibition) with no contraventions found and 36 for threat verification or risk management plan negotiation purposes. A number of these inspections were to verify winter maintenance activities that were added during the Saugeen Valley amendment in 2022. County wide, 953 inspections were conducted in the reporting year with 19% of inspections (182) being prohibition compliance inspections, 1% (9) being RMP compliance inspections and 80% (762) of inspections conducted for threat activity verification or risk management plan negotiation purposes. Overall, the inspections were generally related to manure application and

storage prohibitions, to verify farming or winter maintenance activities or related to chemical / fuel handling and storage. Inspections were higher this year related to the need for confirmation of existing activities related to recent Assessment Report updates.

Risk Management Plans

Four Risk Management Plans were agreed to in 2023 with 18 Risk Management Plans agreed to cumulatively within the Township. There are 81 Risk Management Plans in place County Wide.

The remaining Risk Management Plans that were required to be complete by the initial Risk Management Plan deadline within the Town were completed in 2023.

Education and Outreach

The following is a summary of the Education and Outreach results, County wide, for 2023.

In total, 40 education and outreach daily events were completed this reporting year. Fourteen of the events were training sessions for municipal staff on general source protection topics and more detailed training on how it relates to municipal planning, building, sewage, roads and risk management operations. There were over 100 attendees cumulatively at the training. Fifteen events supported a variety of municipal and public events including Fall Fairs, Home Show, winter maintenance contractor outreach (in collaboration with the City of Guelph) and other community and school events. In support of the mandatory septic inspection program, staff managed and assisted in the delivery of six Septic Social Events to educate and answer questions from residents about the program.

The remaining five days of events was for the Waterloo-Wellington Children's Groundwater Festival. Staff participates and Wellington Source Water Protection / County of Wellington is a sponsor for the Waterloo-Wellington Children's Groundwater Festival. For 2023, the Festival offered a virtual Festival but was also back in-person for four days at the Guelph Lake Conservation Area for the first time since 2019. Links to the virtual Festival content are available here <https://www.youtube.com/@watereducation4640> . The Children's Groundwater Festival is an excellent way to reach Grade 2 to 5 and high school children (and their parents) and deliver water protection messages including source protection. Registration for the 2023 both virtual and in-person Festival was 6,489 students and teachers with views of the videos continuing after the Festival. Registrations from Wellington County was up to 23% from 11% in 2022, likely due to the Festival location being within the County. Staff continue to participate on the organizing committee and various sub-committees including serving as co-chairs.

In addition to events, development reviews and inspections continued and included educational material being provided directly to the proponents generally regarding the threats present, the process (development review, RMP negotiations, prohibition etc.), property specific mapping, and general Source Water information. Where necessary, stickers and metal tags were provided to proponents listing the Spills Action Centre number and that their location is located within a vulnerable area for municipal wells. Updates were made to

the Wellington Source Water Protection website www.wellingtonwater.ca , and staff continue to update and maintain ten fact sheets on specific topics and other print media (i.e. post cards to direct applicants to mapping). Throughout the year, social media posts on a variety of topics were either posted or re-shared by our municipalities' corporate channels. Often the content of these posts was from the Conservation Ontario social media calendar or in partnership with the local Conservation Authorities. Four newspaper ads were also run during the year on topics related to water conservation, salt and fertilizer use.

Septic Inspections

The septic inspection program occurs on a five year cycle. The second round of inspections was scheduled to start in 2020, however, was postponed due to the COVID pandemic, therefore, the septic inspection program occurred in 2023. If a septic system is present within well head protection area with a vulnerability score of 10 or within an issues contributing area for nitrates, a septic inspection is required every 5 years. Within the Town, 5 properties are within these areas and require a septic inspection every five years pursuant to both the Ontario Building Code and the Clean Water Act. The inspections were completed by the Town Building Department. In 2023, 4 septic inspections were completed with the remaining 1 property's septic system confirmed to be outside of the vulnerability score 10 and therefore exempt. For the completed inspections, there were no remedial actions required. County wide the remedial action rate was 57%.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Current staffing and resources.

STRATEGIC PLAN:

GOAL 1: Responsible Government

- 1.1 Taking an evidence-based asset management approach to new infrastructure and renewal projects.
- 1.2 Promote responsible and sustainable growth.

PREPARED BY: Kyle Davis, Risk Management Official

RECOMMENDED BY: Mark Potter, Interim Chief Administrative Officer