

## **Immediate Release**

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### **OUR PRECIOUS GROUNDWATER RESOURCES**

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Protection of our groundwater resource is currently a challenge for each of us. So, how can this protection be accomplished in a long term and sustainable way?

The most effective method of groundwater protection is the awareness and active participation of each resident within the two watersheds (Credit River and Grand Valley) that cover the Town of Erin.

As rural residents know, each well has its own characteristics, so that a groundwater supply cannot be taken for granted.

The area around a well is usually defined, so that there are no practices (fuel tanks, pesticide storage, livestock waste) that are too close, so that contamination could easily migrate into well directly or through the ground. If there are questions, then a licensed well contractor or licensed pump installer can be contacted to inspect the well. In any event, the rural homeowner is encouraged to sample the well at least once each year (preferably in the spring) for bacteria as a minimum precaution. All wells should be sampled at least once for a range of parameters (organic and inorganic) to check for the presence of a range of contaminants. These results can be used as a reference for additional analyses, if there is a problem in future years.

For residents in town, the protection of groundwater is equally important. Whatever is poured down a drain, or directed into a storm sewer, will eventually end up in a creek and the groundwater system. Most municipalities promote the collection and disposal of household waste on special days, so that unused pharmaceuticals, paints, oils and cleaning solutions will never get into the water systems. Residuals from pesticides, fertilizers, road salt, salt from water softeners and blacktop paints for driveways constantly contribute toxins to the shallow groundwater and the local waterways.

On a regional scale, the Town of Erin has commissioned a Groundwater Management Study. Key components of this current publication are now being incorporated into the Official Plan, so that there are specific references to the groundwater resources. These references can now be used to assess the feasibility of a proposed development.

The primary objectives of the groundwater study include:

- X Evaluate the present quantity and quality of the groundwater resources in the study area.
- X Recommend ways to manage the groundwater resources for future use.
- X Suggest ways to protect the groundwater resources from future contamination.

In the groundwater report, it was noted that 30% of the Town's population is serviced by municipal or communal water systems, so that the municipality relies on groundwater as the principle source of water supply.

One of the key steps in the groundwater management strategy is to develop a Public Education Program to increase awareness of resource protection and resource consumption. So, the responsibility of groundwater protection is most effectively placed on the residents of the Town of Erin, who enjoy a resource that is the foundation of our continued excellent quality of life.

- 30 -

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