

Myths & Fairytales

ABOUT DRINKING WATER

Myth 1 We have inexhaustible supply of drinking water.

- There is a finite amount of water on the earth. It just keeps on getting recycled over and over in the watercycle. If we take more than can be replaced naturally, we run short of water.

Myth 2 All sources of water away from urban areas are pristine and clean

- Groundwater, lakes, streams and wetlands are impacted by other ecosystems and human activities within a watershed.
- All things are connected in a watershed and what occurs upstream eventually affects people and conditions downstream.
- Although our groundwater, lakes, rivers and streams can tolerate limited stress, long time problems can develop if we use too much water or allow long term contamination. Surface and groundwater sources are contaminated from air, land and water contamination.
- These problems can be expensive or, in some cases, impossible to treat.

Myth 3 We don't have to protect sources of drinking water when we can just treat the water and make it clean enough to drink.

- Treatment systems do not remove all contamination from water, particularly chemical contamination.
- Ontario has 2 million residents who draw their drinking water directly from untreated groundwater sources. They do not have access to treated water.
- It is cheaper to protect sources of water than to treat the water later with expensive treatment systems.
- It is better for all of us, overall, if we protect sources of water and their ecosystems (plants, wetlands, forests) that have an impact on these sources.



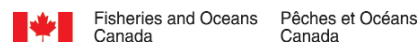
Conservation Ontario

Conservation Ontario represents Ontario's network of 36 Conservation Authorities, local community based environmental organizations that manage watersheds across Ontario. Conservation Authorities work in partnership with municipalities and other stakeholders in carrying out various natural resource programs that balance human, environmental and economic needs. For more information: www.conservation-ontario.on.ca



Ducks Unlimited Canada Membership hotline: 1-866-384-DUCK Ontario office: 1-888-402-4444 or du_barrie@ducks.ca

Ducks Unlimited Canada is a non-profit, charitable organization dedicated to conserving wetlands for the benefit of waterfowl, wildlife and PEOPLE! Ducks Unlimited Canada partners with private organizations, Conservation Authorities, government and many conservation-minded individuals in Ontario to deliver wetland conservation projects all throughout the province. If you would like to support an organization that has a direct, positive impact on wetland habitat conservation in Ontario, then Ducks Unlimited Canada is a good choice. www.ducks.ca



Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Fisheries and Oceans Canada through its Ontario-Great Lakes Area, Fish Habitat Management Program, is responsible for the conservation and protection of fish and fish habitat resources pursuant to the Fisheries Act. It strives to achieve this through a number of partnerships and the application of the Policy for the Management of Fish Habitat. For more information: www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/canwaters-eauxcan



Lotowater Geoscience Consultants

Proud partners in source water protection with Conservation Ontario. Lotowater Geoscience Consultants specialize in the development, management and protection of groundwater resources. Our sister company, Lotowater Technical Services, is comprised of licensed well contractors who develop innovative programs to assess, improve and restore drinking water wells for municipalities and industry. Complete compliance confidence: www.lotowater.com



Ontario Water Works Association

The Ontario Water Works Association (OWWA) is a voluntary membership organization of drinking water professionals dedicated to protecting public health through the delivery of safe, sufficient and sustainable drinking water in Ontario. For more information: www.owwa.com



Water Environment Association of Ontario

The Water Environment Association of Ontario (WEAO) is a voluntary membership organization of technical and professional individuals dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of Ontario's water environment. For more information: www.weao.org

WHO'S LOOKING OUT FOR our water?

Getting to the Source: Protecting Our Drinking Water

Source Water Protection

is a phrase used to describe the idea of ensuring safe sources of drinking water. This means keeping our rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands and groundwater healthy. All these sources of water are linked in a watershed and everything we do ultimately impacts the health of our watersheds. Rather than always relying on expensive technology to clean our water, let's make sure we take the first step to prevent our lakes, rivers and streams from being contaminated in the first place.

This is source protection.



WATERSHED Connections?

What makes up our Watersheds



Where Does Our Drinking Water Come From?

- Surface Sources:** Lakes, Rivers, Streams, Wetlands
- Groundwater:** Aquifer

What Threatens Our Sources Of Drinking Water?

- Pollution:** Air, Water, Land
- Overuse:** Taking too much out

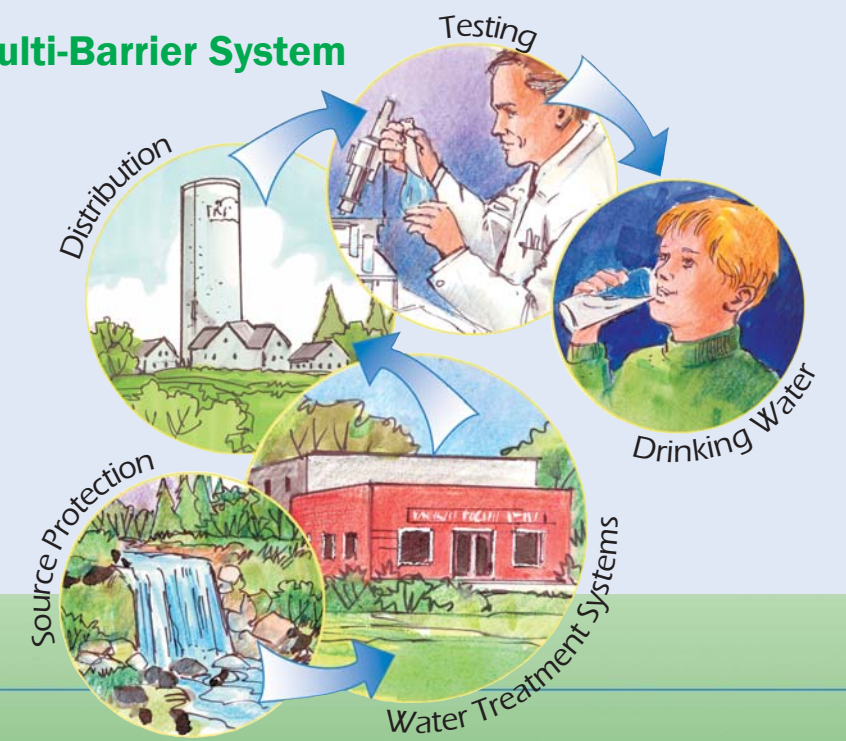
WETLANDS

The Workhorses of Watersheds

Did you know that wetlands play a crucial role in helping to ensure safe drinking water for Ontario? The vegetation in a healthy wetland helps to trap any sediment, nutrients and pollutants in the water, preventing them from traveling downstream in the watershed. The plants take up the nutrients, and the soils and microbes in the wetland break down the contaminants, rendering them less harmful. Wetlands can be found all throughout Ontario: along our lakes, rivers, and streams; around our farm ponds; or all alone in a field or low-lying area. They also provide for good fish and wildlife habitats. They all have a unique and important role to play in helping to ensure that our water is safe to drink.

So, next time you see a swamp or marsh in your community, think of your kitchen tap and the job that wetlands do to help keep your drinking water clean!

Multi-Barrier System



Our drinking water is best protected by using an approach that prevents contamination from drinking water sources to our taps. While it is important to ensure we have safe water treatment and distribution systems, it is also effective and more cost efficient if we take the first steps to care for our lakes, rivers, and streams and preventing their initial contamination.

The Government of Ontario is mapping out an approach to strengthening safeguards to protect drinking water in Ontario. The White Paper on Watershed-Based Source Protection Planning outlines the government's proposal for a watershed-based source protection program. As well, the White Paper explores different approaches to water takings in Ontario to ensure that we have a sustainable supply of water. To review the White Paper, please visit: www.conservation-ontario.on.ca