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Six new members join drinking water source protection committee

New members join Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Drinking Water Source Protection Committee (SPC) at important time as locally-developed source protection plans are implemented in Maitland Valley, Ausable Bayfield areas

A local committee devoted to protecting municipal drinking water sources will soon have some new faces around the table. There are six members becoming part of the Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Source Protection Committee (SPC). They will join nine members who are continuing on the committee. The new members replace six members who will be stepping down as part of a scheduled rotation of membership.

Two of the new representatives were selected by local municipalities and the other four new representatives come from different interests in the community (industry; commerce; property owner and resident associations; environmental sector). The nine continuing members of the committee represent municipalities (3); agriculture (3); public-at-large (2); and environment (1).

It is positive to have renewal in the membership of the committee while still retaining people with experience, said Laurence Brown, committee chairman. "We have been pleased to have the expertise of all the previous members of the committee who have completed terms of reference, assessment reports, and source protection plans," he said. "We wish our retiring committee members well and we look forward to working with a talented group of new members."

The new members of the source protection committee are:

- Myles Murdock, Goderich town councillor – Representing the region's North municipalities (Ashfield-Colborne-Wawanosh; Goderich; Huron-Kinloss; South Bruce).
- Mark McKenzie, former Wellington County councillor – Representing the region's East municipalities (Howick; Mapleton; Minto; North Perth; Perth East; Wellington North; West Perth).
- Bruce Godkin, P. Eng. – Representing Industry. Bruce is President of G-Force Management Group Ltd. in Walton, where he provides strategic business development services to Ontario-based manufacturing organizations.
- Philip Keightley, M.Sc., P. Eng. – Representing Commerce. He has forty years of experience in management, design, and construction of municipal, civil, and structural engineering projects in Canada and overseas. He is Principal Civil Engineer and Vice-President of Boshier Keightley Letham Ltd. (BKL Engineering).
- Kerri Ann O'Rourke – Representing Property Owner and Residents' Associations. She is a former Perth East and Perth County Clerk who now works in her family's business focused on agriculture and transportation.
- John Graham – Representing the Environmental Sector. He is a Project Manager with Veolia Water Canada Inc. where he is responsible for managing 10 municipal drinking water system, 15 potable water distribution systems, and four wastewater treatment plants.

The approval of locally-developed source protection plans, in early 2015, started a process that required at least one third of the 15 members on the committee to step down. The six members leaving the committee volunteered to move off the committee after having served since the committee's inception in 2007. (When formed in 2007, the Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley SPC was the first source protection committee formed in Ontario). The members from the industry, commerce, property owner association, and environmental sector interests were selected through an interview process. The new members are to take part in the next meeting of the source protection committee, scheduled for September 30, 2015.

The Ausable Bayfield Maitland Valley Drinking Water Source Protection Committee is a committee of 15 people who live, work, or rent or own property in the region. In fulfilment of the requirements of the Ontario *Clean Water Act, 2006* and *Ontario Regulation 287/07*, one third of the source protection committee membership is now changing.

The Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) approved source protection plans for the Maitland Valley and Ausable Bayfield source protection areas on January 19, 2015. The source protection plans include policies to address 21 activities that can pose a threat to municipal drinking water sources in certain circumstances (for example, in certain locations and in certain quantities).

Source protection plan policies address activities in four types of vulnerable areas: wellhead protection areas (groundwater) around municipal wells; surface water intake protection zones; significant groundwater recharge areas; and highly vulnerable aquifers. People may find the maps of these areas by visiting sourcewaterinfo.on.ca. Threat activities may be assessed as low, moderate or significant threats to municipal drinking water sources. In this region, significant threats to drinking water are only found in wellhead protection areas (WHPAs). The policies in those relatively small vulnerable areas reduce risk by using tools ranging from education and outreach, to risk management plans, to restricted land uses, to prohibition of some activities.

If you are located close to a municipal well and would like to learn if plan policies apply to you, or how you can protect local drinking water sources, visit the website at sourcewaterinfo.on.ca or phone toll-free 1-888-286-2610, or email info@sourcewaterinfo.on.ca.

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