

Municipal Emergency Response Plans in the Cataraqui Source Protection Area

Source Protection Plan Considerations

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Municipal Emergency Response Plans: Source Protection Plan Considerations

1.0 Introduction

Under the *Clean Water Act, 2006*, source protection plans were developed by multi-stakeholder committees with support from the local source protection authorities/regions (i.e. local conservation authorities). There are 22 such source protection plans across the province, each containing policies to protect municipal sources of drinking water. Some of the source protection plans include policies that require or recommend municipalities to update their emergency response plans, typically by including maps of vulnerable areas around municipal drinking water sources, as well as procedures to address risks posed by spills or unauthorized discharges. In local source protection plans, these policies can be legally binding (mandatory/required) or non-legally binding (recommended).

2.0 Purpose of Document

The purpose of the document is to provide information to source water protection staff about emergency response plans and to outline how municipalities could update emergency response plans to reflect source protection plan requirements or recommendations.

3.0 Legislation

3.1 The *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, 2006*

The *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (2006) requires that all municipalities and provincial ministries have emergency management programs. The emergency management programs must include: emergency response plans, training programs and exercises for providing necessary services and emergency response/recovery activities, public education and preparedness, and any other element required by the standards.

Every municipality must develop an emergency response plan that governs the delivery of necessary services during an emergency, and overarching procedures that municipal employees and other persons will follow in response to the emergency. Emergency plans must be reviewed and revised, if necessary, on an annual basis. The *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (Section 5) also requires that the emergency response plan of a lower-tier municipality in an upper-tier municipality, excluding a county, must conform to the emergency response plan of the upper-tier municipality. Where this conformity does not exist, the upper tier municipal emergency response plan has effect.

3.2 Emergency Management Program Coordinator and Committee

According to O. Reg. 380/04 (Part II: Municipal Standards) under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act*, every municipality must designate an employee or member of council as its Emergency Management Program Coordinator. This coordinator is responsible for the development and implementation of the municipality's emergency management program, coordinating the municipality's

emergency management program with other municipal and provincial emergency management programs, as well as non-governmental organizations involved in emergency management.

The Emergency Management Program Coordinator shall also be a member of a municipality's Emergency Management Program Committee. The committee is comprised of members such as: a senior municipal official, members of council, municipal employees responsible for emergency management functions, and others. This committee is responsible for advising council on the development and implementation of the municipality's emergency management program, as well as carrying out the required annual review of the municipality's emergency management program.

3.3 Municipal Emergency Control Group

It is required under O. Reg. 380/04 that every municipality shall have a Municipal Emergency Control Group (MECG) which is responsible for directing the municipality's response in an emergency, including coordinating the provision of the essential services necessary to minimize the effects of an emergency on the community. The MECG is also commonly called the Municipal Control Group (MCG) or Community Control Group (CCG). This group is comprised of officials, municipal employees or councillors appointed by council, including the Mayor, Public Works Director, Medical Officer of Health and others.

4.0 Municipal Emergency Response Plans and Source Protection Considerations

As discussed in Section 1.0, depending on the policy in the local source protection plan, municipalities can be required or recommended to update their emergency response plans and/or appropriate department supplemental plans to reduce the risk to vulnerable drinking water sources.

The following sections provide information about how a municipality could update municipal emergency response plans to address source water protection. Your local conservation authority (source protection authority) will be able to communicate any specific source water protection requirements or recommendations that are applicable to municipal emergency response plan updates.

4.1 Emergency Response Plans

Municipal emergency response plans provide information on:

- Specific MECG members' roles;
- Communications requirements (e.g. notifying the Province of Ontario that an emergency has been declared);
- The general procedural direction on state of emergency declaration and termination;
- Information tracking (e.g. maintaining a log of all major decisions, instructions issued and actions taken);
- Preparing and submitting final reports containing operational evaluations and recommended changes to the emergency response plan or supplementary plans.

Publically available emergency response plans do not usually provide detail on specific operational procedures for emergency response. Municipal emergency response plans might include specific risk-based plans as appendices.

4.2 Updating Emergency Response Plans

Municipal emergency response plans may state that the Emergency Management Program Coordinator (see Section 3.2) can update, correct or amend information contained within the appendices of this emergency plan on an “as required” basis. Municipalities could add plans to protect municipal drinking water sources as appendices to their municipal emergency response plan.

Updated plans could address emergencies (defined under the *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, 2006*), which include spills (defined under the *Environmental Protection Act, 1990*) and any unauthorized discharge that could affect sources of municipal drinking water.

4.3 Content on Drinking Water Source Protection

The local source protection plan policies typically apply to vulnerable areas delineated for surface water intakes, groundwater wellheads, sensitive aquifers and significant groundwater recharge. Some source protection plans also apply to areas to address known water quality issues, for example elevated levels of nitrate in a municipal groundwater well. Awareness of these vulnerable areas is the first step towards protecting municipal drinking water sources from the impacts of emergencies such as spills.

In order to consider source water protection in municipal emergency response plans, vulnerable area maps for Intake Protection Zones (IPZs), Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPAs), and Issue Contributing Areas (ICAs) could be added as appendices or as a component of department sub-plans. The maps would be a visual tool to indicate increased vulnerability to emergencies such as spills. Technical reports produced to support source water protection include a variety of features that could be included on map(s) within a municipal emergency response plan. Including a map or maps with the following information would provide source water protection context and clarity for emergency responders:

- Intake Protection Zones (IPZs), Wellhead Protection Areas (WHPAs), Issue Contributing Areas (ICAs);
- Coordinates of municipal surface water intakes and wellheads;
- Contaminant times of travel in IPZ-2 (typically 2 hours) and IPZ-3;
- Contaminant times of travel and capture zones for WHPA-A, B, C, D, E, F, Q1 and Q2;
- Transport pathways (spill/discharge shortcuts) and their times of travel to intakes/wellheads if known;
- Contaminant times of travel for different spills if included in Approved Assessment Reports;
- Name of specific water quality issue in an ICA;
- Brief description on the map itself, per recommended text below:
 - *“This map shows the vulnerable areas around municipal drinking water sources in [X] municipality. They were identified under the Clean Water Act and are included in the local Source Protection Plan. Important considerations for emergency response within*

these vulnerable areas are: location of the surface water intakes and wellheads in relation to a spill or discharge; contaminant travel time to these sources of municipal drinking water; location and types of transport pathways which considerably shorten contaminant travel time to the drinking water sources; and water quality issues and their associated Issue Contributing Areas”.

Your local conversation authority (source protection authority) is able to provide the information needed for the mapping.

4.4 Local Roles and Responsibilities

4.4.1 Lower, Upper and Single Tier Municipalities

The *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act* (Section 5) requires that the emergency response plan of a lower-tier municipality in an upper-tier municipality, excluding a county, must conform to the emergency response plan of the upper-tier municipality. Where this conformity does not exist, the upper tier municipal emergency response plan has effect.

Emergency Management Ontario (EMO) identifies the specific emergency management responsibilities of a municipality. When developing an emergency management program, municipalities are responsible for ensuring that the programs for both tiers are “mutually supportive” with coordinated approaches to emergency response. As it relates to drinking water source protection, this could mean that upper tier municipalities include consideration of the vulnerable areas (maps of vulnerable areas, and the types of drinking water threats) within each subject lower tier municipality, and that the emergency response plan and source protection plan considerations are the same within upper and lower tier municipalities.

For all municipalities (upper, lower, and single tier), this may mean working with neighboring municipalities to ensure some level of cooperation in the event of an emergency where more than one municipality would be impacted (e.g. where a spill in one municipality will impact the drinking water source of another).

4.4.2 Municipal Emergency Control Group

As mentioned in Section 3.3, the municipal emergency response is directed and controlled by the Municipal Emergency Control Group (MECG). Source water protection considerations could fall to different members of the MECG. The following list suggests potential updates to the roles and responsibilities of the MECG to support source water protection:

- **Fire Chief:** Notify the MOECC Spills Action Centre (SAC) and the MECG per standard protocols, with an increased awareness of protection zones for municipal drinking water sources, and local source protection plans.
- **Director/Manager of Public Works/Engineering:** Assess the potential impacts of emergency conditions on sources of municipal drinking water. Provide the MECG with information and advice on matters related to utilities including the location of intakes and/or supply wells and anticipated contaminant travel times. Take actions to prevent contamination of drinking water

supplies, including liaising with water treatment plant operators to determine if pumping from water sources or pumping to the distribution system should be suspended temporarily until the emergency is over.

- **Medical Officer of Health:** Provide advice on any matters which may adversely affect public health, provide authoritative instructions on health and safety matters to the public through the Public Information Officer, and ensure the safety of drinking water in conjunction with the Utilities representative.
- **Director/Manager of Operations and Roads:** Identify any transportation corridors which could lead to the drinking water supply being impacted during an emergency. Provide advice to the MCEG on estimated travel times to the drinking water supply via transportation corridors.
- **Public Information Officer:** Ensure effective information transfer including drinking water advisories issued by the Medical Officer of Health.
- **Emergency Management Program Coordinator:** The Coordinator can update the appendices of an emergency response plan to include information about vulnerable areas and other relevant information, as part of the annual review of the program and plan. The local Source Protection Authority/Region can provide the data to enable municipalities to produce their own maps of vulnerable areas, or provide the maps directly. The Coordinator could ensure that neighboring municipalities are aware of the location of other drinking water intakes/wellheads and take this into account through their emergency management programs. This would apply in the event of an emergency in one municipality that could impact the local drinking water supply of another. The Coordinator could also establish notification procedures between neighboring municipalities to ensure the protection of drinking water sources in an emergency.
- **Environmental Protection Officer:** These municipal officers may be present at some municipalities, and have authority as outlined in their respective municipal by-laws. Their responsibilities typically include responding to spills, ensuring that the MOECC Spills Action Centre (SAC) has been notified, ensuring, completing or contracting out the clean-up and making the in-the-field call about whether MOECC field support is needed. The other duty that is generally seen with municipal environmental protection officers is sewer use by-law enforcement, involving the sampling of effluent at industrial and commercial facilities that have surcharge agreements with the municipalities to discharge into the municipal sewer. Therefore training these officers for source water protection considerations to respond appropriately during emergencies is helpful to protecting sources of municipal drinking water.

4.5 Mitigating Impacts of Emergencies on Drinking Water Sources

4.5.1 Operational Procedures

Operational procedures for addressing emergency spills and discharges depend on the nature of the occurrence, and are important to have in place to ensure protection of municipal drinking water sources. Operational procedures could be developed to address spills of different types. Below, please find two examples of the types of emergencies and their associated operational procedures that could be developed or updated to reduce the risk to sources of drinking water.

- **Runoff Water from Fire-Fighting**
 - Following Fire Department Standard Operating Procedures, measures should be taken to address runoff water from fire-fighting where this runoff water could contaminate drinking water sources. In the event that the spill is too large to contain, then a call would be made to the closest spill response trailer, or if necessary, the regional response team.
 - Depending on where the fire occurs, the runoff water may contain hazardous chemicals, pathogens, etc. which could impact the sources of municipal drinking water. The runoff could also contain fire-retardants and fire-fighting foam. Therefore, where possible, runoff water from fire-fighting sites should be re-directed away from drains, surface watercourses and water bodies, and should also avoid contamination of groundwater. It is also important that runoff water be contained using berms, tanks or other such structures, and existing shut off valves, such that the water does not drain to any sewers. This will help protect sources of drinking water.
- **Chemical Spills**
 - Local emergency responders may not be equipped to respond to chemical spills, and the closest municipal Hazmat teams are typically more than two hours away. Having local spill kits with containment equipment and trained staff could help to improve the local response to chemical spills.

4.5.2 Other Measures

Other possible measures to mitigate the impacts of emergencies could include, but are not limited to:

- Regularly consider advances in equipment and technology that could improve responses to emergencies that could impact municipal sources of drinking water.
- Place road signs at the edges of Intake Protection Zones and Wellhead Protection Areas as visual reminders to implement any special procedures that are identified in the municipal emergency response plan.
- Use municipal traffic regulating by-laws to prohibit transportation of specific substances/volume of substances through WHPAs and/or IPZs.
- Identify in the municipal emergency response plan that assistance may be requested during an emergency. Municipalities may want to share copies of its MERP with bordering municipalities and regions which could provide assistance during an emergency. Some upper tier municipalities will only activate their MERP in the event that it is beyond the capacity of a member lower tier municipality to respond to an emergency. During an emergency, it is possible to request assistance from upper tier municipalities, neighboring municipalities, as well as the Province of Ontario, the federal government, and external agencies with specialized emergency management knowledge.
- Where possible, municipalities may consider creating “mutual assistance agreements” with neighboring communities, for improved responses to larger scale emergencies. For source water protection, this type of mutual assistance between municipalities could include shared resources such as spill response equipment/kits, or emergency responders with training (e.g. spills response, hazardous materials, dangerous goods) that would be helpful in the event of a spill that would pose a risk to a drinking water supply. Municipalities with greater capacity to respond to spills could be specifically identified through a mutual assistance agreement as a key shared resource to respond to spills in neighboring municipalities. Municipalities benefitting from this shared resource could provide financial support to the continued maintenance and training of these specialized staff.

4.6 Training for Awareness of Drinking Water Source Protection and Local Source Protection Plan Needs

4.6.1 Training

Source water protection information could be included in the training associated with the review of municipal emergency programs. Local Source Protection Authority/Region staff may be available to provide information or training. Staff knowledgeable in source water protection and local source protection plans could provide MCEG members with the following information:

- Location of wellheads and surface water intakes;
- Location of road signs: in many source protection areas, road signs have been placed at municipal arterial roads to raise awareness of drinking water IPZs and WHPAs;

- Maps of vulnerable areas and issue contributing areas, including instructions on how to quickly interpret these maps during an emergency;
- Travel times of contaminants within vulnerable areas;
- Water quality issue type in an ICA: to bring about awareness of the increased vulnerability of sources of drinking water, to a spill in the ICA containing the same chemical or pathogen issue;
- Locations of transport pathways: for example, indicating that a cluster of abandoned wells are transport pathways that considerably shorten the time of travel of a contaminant to a municipal wellhead, may ensure an appropriate response should a spill occur near the cluster of abandoned wells;
- Resources available to the MCEG in the event of a spill: for example, the MOECC Spills Action Centre (SAC) is familiar with the drinking water source protection program and have updated their Operating Procedure cards to include source protection considerations.

4.6.2 Emergency Responder Training

Additional training for emergency responders could be of interest to some municipalities. If emergency responders are trained and certified to directly control spills, on-the-ground reaction time to emergencies will likely be reduced. This benefits a municipality generally in its emergency response, and specifically improves the protection of drinking water sources. Spills response training would need to be provided by an appropriate organization. For example, the Transportation Community Awareness and Emergency Response Initiative (TRANSCAER) Safety Train is a railway tank car that has been converted into a classroom for the purpose of training emergency responders across Canada in the response to a transportation incident which involves dangerous goods.

Neighboring municipalities, or related upper/lower tier municipalities, could consider sharing the cost of training program(s) for emergency responders. The deployment of these trained emergency responders could be incorporated into a “mutual assistance agreement” and could be called upon by the subject municipalities in the event of an emergency. Municipalities could reach out to their Fire Coordinators to explore mutual assistance agreements. Under the direction of the Fire Marshal, fire coordinators are responsible for the establishment of a mutual aid plan whereby the municipalities that serve a designated area agree to provide assistance to each other during an emergency, if requested, as per the *Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997*.

5.0 References

1. *Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, 2006* at <http://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e09#BK3>
2. *Environmental Protection Act, 1990* at <http://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90e19>
3. Drinking Water Source Protection Background Document: The transportation of specified substances along transportation corridors. v.3 March 2011. Conservation Authorities and Conservation Ontario.
4. Emergency Responses Policies Chart. Lower Trent Source Protection Area. July 18, 2014.
5. Personal communication between Chitra Gowda and Jason Jessel (MOECC) on the role of the Risk Management Official (RMO).
6. Personal communication between Chitra Gowda and Kyle Davis (County of Wellington municipalities) on Environmental Protection Officers.
7. Personal communication between Holly Evans (CRCA) and the Office of the Fire Marshal and Emergency Management on how municipalities can account for source water protection in emergency management and spill contingency plans.
8. Roles of municipalities in emergency management programs defined by Emergency Management Ontario (https://www.emergencymanagementontario.ca/english/insideemo/legislationandregulation/handbook_EMCPA.html). December 15, 2015.
9. Review of relationships between municipalities completed through a review of MEPs from:
 - a. City of Kingston (single tier)
 - b. Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands (lower tier)
 - c. Loyalist Township (lower tier)
 - d. Township of Champlain (lower tier)
 - e. City of Hamilton (single tier)
 - f. United Counties of Leeds and Grenville (upper tier)
 - g. County of Lennox and Addington (upper tier)
10. Mutual Aid defined using: Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services: Provincial Emergency Systems (http://www.mcscs.jus.gov.on.ca/english/FireMarshal/aboutofm/ProgramsActivities/ProvincialEmergencySystems/About_ProvEmerg.html). December 16, 2015.
11. Role of CEMC and relationships between municipalities explored using: Ontario Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services: The Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act (https://www.emergencymanagementontario.ca/english/insideemo/legislationandregulation/handbook_EMCPA.html). December 16, 2015.
12. Ability of CEMC to update/correct/amend MEPs as required, identified in several MEPs:
 - a. Municipality of North Grenville

- b. County of Lanark
 - c. County of Frontenac
 - d. Town of Gananoque
 - e. Township of North Frontenac
 - f. Township of Augusta
 - g. Township of Rideau Lakes
 - h. Loyalist Township
 - i. Town of Smiths Falls
 - j. Front of Yonge Township
13. Role of CEMC to ensure coordination of MEPs between municipalities, the province and others explored through Emergency Management Doctrine for Ontario (<https://www.emergencymanagementontario.ca/stellent/groups/public/@mcscs/@www/@emo/documents/abstract/ec081624.pdf>). December 15, 2015.
 14. Hazardous material spill response training information from TRANSCAER (<http://transcaer.ca/index.php/en/index>). December 17, 2015.
 15. Role of REET explored through Environment Canada (<https://www.ec.gc.ca/ee-ue/default.asp?lang=en&n=22F58D1B#53>). April 22, 2016.
 16. Role of Spills Action Centre explored through the DWT Background Reports published by CRCA: Transportation Corridors Report v3. April 25, 2016.
 17. Role of Spills Action Centre explored through MOECC's October 20, 2015 presentation. April 25, 2016.
 18. Role of Canadian Coast Guard explored through the DWT Background Reports published by CRCA: Transportation Corridors v3. April 25, 2016.
 19. Role of Canadian Coast Guard Environmental Response program explored through the Canadian Coast Guard (<http://www.ccg-gcc.gc.ca/ccg/er/home>). April 25, 2016.
 20. Role of CANUTEC explored through Transport Canada's website (<https://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/tdg/publications-tp2553e-345.htm>). May 2, 2016.
 21. Role of Transport Canada, Environment Canada, CANUTEC explored through the DWT Background Reports published by CRCA: Transportation Corridors v3. April 26, 2016

Appendix A – Regional, Provincial and Federal Agency Roles and Responsibilities

A1 - Regional Environmental Emergencies Team

The function of a REET is to facilitate information-sharing and decision-making during the response to a major incident. It can provide advice on a number of issues, including the resources at risk, environmental priorities, as well as the most appropriate clean-up measures.

The Cataraqui Source Protection Area is covered by two Regional Environmental Emergency Teams (REETs): Eastern Lake Ontario REET Area and Eastern Ontario REET Area.

Municipal emergency response plans could include contact information for applicable REETs.

A2 - Spills Action Centre

The Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) is the lead provincial agency for environmental emergencies. MOECC operates the Spills Action Centre (SAC), which was established under the *Environmental Protection Act* to maintain a province-wide service to receive, evaluate, and initiate responses to notifications of spills and other urgent environmental matters, as well as other duties.

In addition to receiving reports of spills, the SAC is responsible for determining the adequacy of reported spills response activities, facilitating or triggering a response where necessary, and activating a Ministry field response as required. SAC Operating Procedure Cards contain process guidelines for coordinating responses and notifying other agencies, as required. The Operating Procedure Cards have been updated to include source protection information to improve emergency responses.

At the local level, municipal emergency response plans could be updated to include contact information for the Spills Action Centre to help reduce the risk to drinking water sources.

A3 - Canadian Coast Guard

The Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) is responsible for marine spill preparedness and response in Canadian waters. It is the lead response agency for spills from vessels, ship to shore fuel transfer operations, spills of unknown origin, as well as spills that impact or threaten transboundary waters.

The CCG's Environmental Response program monitors or manages clean-up efforts for any pollution incident from ship-sources or mystery sources in waters under Canada's jurisdiction. The program's mission objectives are to minimize the economic, environmental, and public health impacts of marine pollution incidents. There are national, regional, and area response plans to marine spills.

At the local level, municipal emergency response plans could be updated to include contact information for the Canadian Coast Guard. Information could also be provided to the Canadian Coast Guard about the vulnerable areas surrounding local municipal residential drinking water supplies.

A4 - Transport Canada

Transport Canada is responsible for administering the National Marine Oil Spill Preparedness and Response Regime. Facilities that transfer oil to or from oil tankers of 150 tonnes gross tonnage, oil tankers, and all vessels of 400 tonnes gross tonnage that travel through Canadian waters are required to have a shipboard oil pollution emergency plan and an arrangement with a certified response organization in the event of a spill. Response organizations are certified every three years by Transport Canada.

The certified response organization for the major petroleum companies as they travel through the Cataraqui Source Protection Area is the Eastern Canada Response Corporation (ECRC), which has response centres near Sarnia, Ontario and Montreal, Quebec. ECRC does not provide response services for chemical spills, although it will provide logistical support or equipment. Chemical spills require response from hazardous material (HAZMAT) teams.

At the local level, municipal emergency response plans could be updated to include contact information for Transport Canada to help reduce the risk to drinking water sources.

A5 - Environment Canada and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change

Environment Canada has a National Environmental Emergencies Contingency Plan which applies to unexpected environmental emergencies and natural hazards. Environment Canada can be the lead agency/supporting agency for environmental emergencies that relate to transportation, federal facilities/lands, spills of unknown origin, and Canada/United States transboundary spills, depending on the situation. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change is generally the lead agency to respond, coordinate and monitor spills, while Environment Canada acts as a supporting agency.

Railway companies are responsible and accountable for the safety of their operations, and the *Railway Safety Act* ensures that railways operate safely. Environment Canada has jurisdiction over spills on railway rights-of-way that are federally regulated and the provinces have jurisdiction over materials on provincial lands.

At the local level, municipal emergency response plans could be updated to include contact information for Environment Canada and MOECC in the event of a spill along a railway.

A6 - Canadian Transport Emergency Centre

The Canadian Transport Emergency Centre (CANUTEC) must be contacted in the event of a dangerous goods accident involving rail, marine or aviation transportation methods, as well as a dangerous good incident which includes explosives, infectious substances, or any accidental release from a container which has experienced a catastrophic failure, as required by federal regulations. CANUTEC is operated by Transport Canada to assist in the handling of dangerous goods emergencies.

Emergency response assistance plans (ERAPs) are required for the transportation of dangerous goods. ERAPs provide on-site assistance to local emergency responders through the provision of emergency response by telephone, the provision of emergency response advice first by telephone and then by a knowledgeable person attending the accident site and the supply of specialized equipment and a response team to mitigate the effect of the dangerous goods at the accident site.

At the local level, municipal emergency response plans could be updated to include contact information for the Canadian Transport Emergency Centre.