



CATARAQUI SOURCE PROTECTION COMMITTEE
AGENDA FOR MEETING # 47

Date: Thursday February 9, 2012
 Time: 7:00 PM
 Location: Outdoor Centre, Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area
 1655 Perth Road (Division Street), Kingston

#	Topic	Leader	Time (min)	Action Item?
1	Roll Call and Notice of Proxies	John Williamson, Chair	10	
2	Adoption of the Agenda			
3	Declarations of Conflict of Interest			
4	Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes from January 19, 2012 (attached)			
5	Business Arising			
(a)	Letter sent on behalf of the Committee to Mary Anne Covelli, Director, Source Protection Programs Branch, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, regarding provincial funding for source protection plan implementation, dated January 26, 2012 (attached)			
6	Delegations	Rob McRae, Project Manager	5	
7	Correspondence			
8	Sector Updates from the Committee	John Williamson, Chair	15	

#	Topic	Leader	Time (min)	Action Item?
9	Business / Reports			
(a)	Update on Source Protection Committee Chairs' Dialogue with the Ontario Ministry of the Environment regarding Next Steps	John Williamson, Chair	10	
(b)	Ontario Ministry of the Environment Staff Comments on the Internal Version of the Draft Source Protection Plan (attached)	Wendy Lavender, Liaison Officer, MOE	10	Y
(c)	Recent Improvements to the Draft Source Protection Plan (staff report attached)	Holly Evans, Water Quality Specialist Christine Woods, Source Protection Planner	60	
(d)	Path Forward for Consultation on the Draft Source Protection Plan (staff report attached)	Rob McRae, Project Manager	20	Y
10	Announcements or Inquiries			
(a)	Kingston Whig-Standard articles about Roblin, Ontario: Gas Spill Cases on Rise (January 27, 2012) and Village-Wide Water Testing Looms (January 30, 2012)			
11	Motions or Notices of Motion	John Williamson, Chair	10	
12	Questions from the Media			
13	IN CAMERA Session (if required)			
14	Next meeting – April 12, 2012 (Kingston)			
15	Adjournment			

Please inform Donna Cellini at (613) 546-4228 ext. 248 or dcellini@cataraquieregion.on.ca if you will not be able to attend the meeting. Members voting by proxy are requested to please communicate their proxy to the Chair prior to the meeting.

Delegations wishing to speak to the Source Protection Committee are asked to please contact Rob McRae, Project Manager prior to the meeting, via (613) 546-4228 ext. 224 or robmcrae@cataraquieregion.on.ca.

THE CATARAQUI SOURCE PROTECTION COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING # 46

Thursday, January 19, 2012 (7:00 PM)

General Purpose Room, Outdoor Centre
Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area, Kingston

Present: John C. Williamson, Chair Rob Cumming Gary Davison (arr'd 7:17PM)
Scott Ewart Joan Green Jacques Labelle
Kathleen Laird Wendy Lavender Richard Lindgren
Chris Mangan-Greene Nona Mariotti Allan McPhail
Alex Palilionis Jeff Peters Peter Raabe

Regrets: Richard Bresee John Conley Kevin Riley
Kim Sytsma

Staff Present: Donna Cellini, Project Secretary
Holly Evans, Water Quality Specialist
Steve Knechtel, General Manager/Secretary-Treasurer
Rob McRae, Project Manager, Source Water Protection
Christine Woods, Source Protection Planner

Guests: George Wallace, City of Kingston
Representatives of the Unity Road Ratepayers Association

Chair John C. Williamson called the Cataraqui Source Protection Committee (SP Committee) meeting to order at 7:09 P.M.

1) **Roll Call and Mileage**

There were 10 voting members present and another joined shortly after meeting began.

2) **Adoption of Agenda**

Moved by: Rob Cumming
Seconded by: Nona Mariotti

THAT the Cataraqui Source Protection Committee members adopt the meeting agenda as distributed.

Carried

3) **Declarations of Conflict of Interest**

There were none.

4) Approval of Cataraqui Source Protection Committee Minutes

Approval of December 8, 2011 Cataraqui Region Source Protection Committee Minutes.

Moved by: Nona Mariotti
Seconded by: Chris Mangan-Greene

THAT the minutes of the December 8, 2011 meeting of the Cataraqui Source Protection Committee be approved as circulated.

Carried

5) Business Arising

Rob McRae, Project Manager, advised the members of a correction made to the policy revision notes of December 8, 2011. The required correction was to clarify that residents in the serviced portion of the community of Sydenham would be required by the Township of South Frontenac to hook up to their municipal water service, rather than a sewer.

6) Delegations

There were none.

7) Correspondence

- a) Max Christie, Chair, Quinte Region Source Protection Committee, to Mary Ann Covelli, Director, Source Protection Programs Branch, Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE), regarding provincial funding for source protection plan implementation, dated December 16, 2011

Mr. McRae indicated that this letter is similar to others sent to the Ministry regarding the concern in rural areas on how implementation costs will be borne by relatively few residents.

It was suggested that the SP Committee should consider sending a similar letter. It was agreed that this would be appropriate, even though the Ministry is aware of the concerns regarding funding and that the Cataraqui Source Protection Authority had already sent its own letter on the topic.

- b) Max Christie, Chair, Quinte Region Source Protection Committee, to Mary Ann Covelli, Director, Source Protection Programs Branch, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, regarding the involvement of the Technical Standards and Safety Authority in drinking water source protection planning, dated December 21, 2011

Mr. McRae informed the members that this letter from the Quinte Source Protection Region raises concerns regarding the Technical Standards and Safety Authority (and its overseer, the Ontario Ministry of Consumer Services) and their apparent unwillingness to actively participate in drinking water source protection work.

- c) Mary Ann Covelli, Director, Source Protection Programs Branch, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, to source protection committee chairs and project managers, regarding draft source protection plan policy development, dated January 5, 2012

Mr. McRae advised the members that this letter was circulated to all source protection committee chairs and project managers. It provides direction for the draft source protection plan policy development. Mr. McRae indicated it would be helpful to the source protection committees across the Province.

8) Sector Updates from the Committee

Prior to opening the floor to the members Chair John Williamson asked if any of the guests wished to address the SP Committee. Mike Sewell of the Unity Road Ratepayers Association spoke on behalf of the Association. He indicated they were attending the meeting as they have a concern regarding potential negative impacts to groundwater sources resulting from the installation and use of solar panels in their area.

Scott Ewart indicated that the tourist sector is concerned about the possibility of reductions to the development potential of Smith Island (in the St. Lawrence River off Brockville) due to source protection plan policies.

Peter Raabe commented on the recent City of Brockville Council meeting where the Source Protection Committee and staff had presented. He indicated that it was well done and that Christine Woods, Source Protection Planner, was able to respond appropriately to numerous questions and that there has been no subsequent discussion or questions.

Nona Mariotti raised a concern on behalf of the area lake associations relative to the debris left behind from ice fishers (associated with their huts). They have looked into this through a number of channels and are still unsure who the responsibility of educating people rests with. She noted that perhaps some signage can be put into place for the next season.

Rob Cumming advised the SP Committee that the Lafarge industrial facility at Bath had been chosen for a 'water foot printing' exercise and that he will share the results with the SP Committee once the study is complete.

Richard Lindgren commented on the Township of Frontenac Islands Council meeting where the Source Protection Committee and staff had presented. He indicated that it was well received and that the Council was thankful for the update and will refer it to their planning consultant.

Chris Mangan-Greene spoke briefly about the regulations and compliance measures that Canadian golf courses have to abide by with respect to the handling and storage of pesticides.

9) Business/Reports

- a) Key Outcomes from the Source Protection Committee Chairs' Meeting in January 2012
Chairs' Meeting, John Williamson, Chair

Chair John Williamson commented that with the August 20th deadline (for submission of proposed source protection plans) fast approaching he felt comfortable with the ability of the Cataraqui SP Committee to submit on-time, relative to some other SP Areas and regions.

He indicated that the presentation that he was to deliver to the Minister of the Environment had been cancelled but he was able to deliver it to the other Chairs and is still hoping to meet with the Minister. He indicated that he will share a further update with the members at that point.

The Chair commented that the new Director (Mary Anne Covelli) appears to be a quick study and should be a good shepherd for the Source protection plans.

He also commented that there was a communication presentation that was a little late in the process but that will help to ensure some consistency in messaging across Ontario.

Remarks by the Chief Drinking Water Inspector, John Stager, were very supportive of drinking water source protection, which he referred to as a “flagship” program (this suggests that work will continue beyond 2012).

Wendy Lavender, MOE Liaison Officer, added that there has been some great work done under the Provincial initiative and that further communication of this should be developed and published as it will help to sell what we do. She also reminded the members that with the Assessment Report approval, the deadline for the mandatory septic tank maintenance inspection programs has been set.

b) Update on Source Protection Plan Development and Consultation, Rob McRae, Project Manager

Prior to his presentation Mr. McRae advised the members that Karla Maki-Esdon had reported that the source protection talk at the United Counties of Leeds and Grenville Joint Services Committee meeting on January 18th had gone well. He also advised the members that there were positive staff-level meetings held with the Township of Leeds and Thousand Islands and the City of Kingston.

Mr. McRae presentation updated the members on pre-consultation, which was coming to an end. He shared the most recent letters with the members in a previous circulation and he reported that approximately 65% of the implementation bodies who had been approached with draft policy ideas had responded with comments.

He advised the members that the Draft Source Protection Plan and associated Explanatory Document are being improved daily and that the plans for consultation (including three public open houses) are coming together.

Mr. McRae reviewed a revised draft timeline for the first half of 2012 with the members, which included the plan development, open houses and the SP Committee meetings. He also reviewed the consultation recipients and the methods of circulating the draft version of the plan to those that will be required to implement it. The SP Committee asked to review the generic consultation letters being sent out, and the Chair and Project Manager indicated that draft versions would be circulated shortly for a brief review.

c) Internal Version of the Draft Source Protection Plan, Holly Evans, Water Quality Specialist and Christine Woods, Source Protection Planner

Ms. Evans and Ms. Woods indicated that the purpose of the circulated report and this presentation were: (1) to bring attention to the changes that were made to draft policies after the December 8th Committee meeting, and (2) to gather input from the members on further potential changes.

The members discussed various items at great length and agreed to the following:

- Delete draft policy 7.10.2-SA (spill response by the St. Lawrence Seaway Management Corporation for source protection) since the Ontario *Clean Water Act* has no legal effect on that body, and since the intent can be achieved through correspondence with the Corporation;
- Delete the local business improvements policies (such as 7.5.7-SA) and transfer the intent to the area-wide education and outreach policy (4.4.1-SA);
- Add transport pathways policies to the wellhead protection areas, to be consistent with the intake protection zones and to help prevent the aggravation of their vulnerability scoring;
- Maintain the draft policy that prohibits some future agricultural activities on wellhead protection area 'B' lands (e.g. draft policy 6.5.9-CW), despite the comments from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) not supporting the approach;
- Revise draft policy 6.5.8-SA (changes to Regulation 903) to also call for content about the drinking water threat posed by road salt to be added to the "Best Management Practices for Wells" manual that is produced by the MOE to help implement that regulation;
- The policy referring to research around hamlets (5.2.4-SA) would stay as proposed by staff in the January 5th circulation;
- The appropriateness of one or more 'green energy' related policies (for example, regarding the relationship between solar panel installations and groundwater sources) will require further research before the SP Committee could determine the best course of action. It was noted that additional policies related to the transport pathway aspect of installations could only be introduced within the wellhead protection areas. Staff offered to look further into the topic and return at the February meeting with a suggested course of action.

With regard to the pre-consultation comments received by OMAFRA, Wendy Lavender advised the members that the Ministry sent the same theme style letters to all source protection committees and that if required further dialogue can take place with that Ministry.

Other items that were raised during this presentation including adding the interested community roundtable participants and a local green energy organization called SWITCH to the consultation list.

10) Announcements or Inquiries

- a) Newspaper article: Water protection plan to cover 'significant' threats (Brockville Recorder & Times, January 11, 2012)

Mr. McRae indicated that this article was an example of the media coverage that often results from municipal council visits.

- b) Chair John Williamson thanked the members of the Unity Road Ratepayers Association for attending the SP Committee meeting.

- c) Mr. McRae advised the members that the Assessment Report approval notice had been posted on the Environmental Registry by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment.

Steve Knechtel congratulated the members and staff on the approval of the Assessment Report on behalf of the Source Protection Authority.

11) Motions/Notice of Motion

There were none.

12) Opportunity for Questions from the Media

There were no questions.

13) IN CAMERA Session

This was not required.

14) Next Meeting

Next meeting of the SP Committee: February 9, 2012
7:00 PM Regular Meeting
General Purpose Room, Outdoor Centre
Little Cataraqui Creek Conservation Area, Kingston

15) Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:04 P.M. on a motion by Gary Davison.

John C. Williamson, Chair

Rob McRae, Project Manager



January 26, 2012

Files: SPP 4-0, 8

VIA E-MAIL & MAIL

Mary Anne Covelli, Director
Source Protection Programs Branch
Ontario Ministry of the Environment
40 St. Clair Avenue West, 14th Floor
Toronto ON M4V 1M2

Dear Ms. Covelli,

RE: SOURCE PROTECTION PLANS – PROVINCIAL IMPLEMENTATION FUNDING

The Cataraqui Source Protection Committee (SP Committee) met on January 19th to discuss its forthcoming Draft Source Protection Plan, and the members asked that I communicate their concerns to you regarding the need for provincial implementation funding.

We feel that it is critical for the Province to commit multi-year funding towards the implementation of the source protection plans. While we recognize the current fiscal constraints, we fear that the absence of such support could undermine the substantial investment to-date. Despite the intent of the *Clean Water Act, 2006*, it may not be feasible, without a provincial funding role, for aspects of our plans to be implemented in an effective and timely manner. In particular, the risk management work that is enabled by Part IV of the *Act* requires support from the Ministry.

We wish to echo the concerns raised by the Quinte Region (via a letter to your attention dated December 16, 2011), which noted the limited capacity of smaller municipalities to shoulder the associated costs, and which identified a particular need for assistance during the initial years of implementation. As you know, numerous municipalities in eastern Ontario have raised these concerns via council resolutions. The Cataraqui Source Protection Area is similar to the Quinte Region, and our SP Committee is therefore working to identify affordable policies that manage risks with minimal 'new' effort by municipalities and others.

Our SP Committee is aware of ongoing work by Ministry staff to estimate implementation costs. We acknowledge the helpful work by the Conservation Ontario 'Post-2012 Working Group' (September 2011) on this question, as well as similar correspondence from across Ontario, including a letter from the Cataraqui Source Protection Authority to Conservation Ontario (November 10, 2011, copied to the Ministry).

The remarks by Chief Drinking Water Inspector John Stager at the recent Chairs' meeting illustrate the enduring commitment of the Ministry to the source protection program. An announcement of funding support this winter

would provide an opportunity for your Minister to highlight our achievements to-date, would alleviate the widespread concerns in the municipal sector about implementation, and would help to ensure the overall success of the program. A near-term announcement would create a supportive context for the latter months of source protection plan development, thereby fostering local 'buy-in' and facilitating on-time submissions.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter, and for your actions to help address our concerns. I encourage you and your team to maintain an active dialogue with the source protection community (including the 19 Chairs, Conservation Ontario, staff, and others) about funding options. As part of this dialogue, I would ask that the Ministry please re-schedule the planned meeting between the Chairs and the Minister regarding funding and post August 2012 program directions. Decisions on these questions are needed sooner rather than later, as they will influence the content of the first-round source protection plans (some of which will need to be completed in April), the ability of source protection areas/regions to retain qualified staff and the interest of committee members to keep contributing to the program.

If you have any questions about the above, please contact me at (613) 353-7535 or willj@kos.net.

Yours truly,

(original signed by)

John C. Williamson
Chair, Cataraqui Source Protection Committee

c.c. (e-mail): Wendy Lavender, Source Protection Programs Branch, Ontario Ministry of the Environment
Source Protection Committee Chairs
Cataraqui Source Protection Committee
Cataraqui Source Protection Authority
Charley Wortz and Nicole Barbato, Conservation Ontario

THE CATARAQUI SOURCE PROTECTION COMMITTEE

REPORT

To: Cataraqui Source Protection Committee Date: February 2, 2012

From: Christine Woods, Source Protection Planner Files: SPP 4-0, 8
Holly Evans, Water Quality Specialist

RE: INTERNAL VERSION # 2 OF THE DRAFT SOURCE PROTECTION PLAN

The purpose of this information report is to describe the revisions made in the second internal version of the Draft Source Protection Plan and the accompanying Explanatory Document since your January 19th meeting.

Staff received many constructive comments from Source Protection Committee members, municipal staff (notably at the City of Kingston), our policy advisor (French Planning Services Inc.), and Ministry of the Environment (MOE) staff that influenced this version of the Plan.

There were a number of major additions and revisions made to the Draft Plan so that it:

- Includes a summary that gives the reader a clearer picture of the planning process;
- Contains more plain language and context so the information is more accessible to a broader audience;
- Is a stronger standalone document (e.g., include highlights from the Assessment Report); and
- More closely complies with the *Clean Water Act* and Ontario Regulation 287/07.

Major changes are highlighted (in grey) in the Draft Plan where:

- A component of the policy was deleted; or
- A wording change results in a change of policy intent; or
- Substantial re-wording was undertaken to improve clarity or *Clean Water Act* compliance.

A meeting is scheduled for February 6th between CRCA and MOE staff to discuss the Ministry comments that were recently shared with us (see the materials for Item 9(b) on the meeting agenda). The outcome of that discussion and its potential impact on the Draft Plan will be shared with the Source Protection Committee at the February 9th meeting. Staff would like to make members aware that MOE comments include:

- Recommended wording changes to more closely tie policies to drinking water threats and language appearing in the *Clean Water Act*;
- A request to remove eleven policies that are considered to be out of scope; and
- Revisions to context to more accurately reflect the current Ministry interpretation of *Clean Water Act* requirements.

Leading up to the meeting, staff will also be revisiting Chapter 2 to improve its readability, and following up on some of the policy discussions at your January 19th meeting. .

Chapter 8 (Overall Considerations for Future Planning Cycles) of the Draft Plan may be revised to include additional topics previously identified by the Source Protection Committee as items of interest. Staff intend to present the proposed contents of this chapter to MOE staff to determine if they are eligible for inclusion (i.e. before this chapter is revised). An update will be communicated at the February 9th meeting.

Summary

We appreciate the time you have taken to review the first internal Draft Source Protection Plan and Explanatory Document. Per the staff report for Item 9(d), we feel that these items are sufficiently advanced that they should be shared for community review in the near future. We look forward to working with the Committee on some final improvements prior to publication.

Please contact us at any time if you would like to go over any aspect of the documents.

Respectfully submitted,

(original signed by)

Christine Woods MCIP, RPP
Source Protection Planner

(original signed by)

Holly Evans
Water Quality Specialist

Approved for circulation RM

- Attachments: (1) Internal Draft # 2 Source Protection Plan (February 2, 2012)
(2) Explanatory Document for Internal Draft # 2 Source Protection Plan (February 2, 2012)

THE CATARAQUI SOURCE PROTECTION COMMITTEE

REPORT

To: Cataraqui Source Protection Committee

Files: SPP 4-0, 8

From: Rob McRae, Project Manager, Source Water Protection

Date: February 2, 2012

RE: PATH FORWARD FOR CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT SOURCE PROTECTION PLAN

This staff report seeks direction from the Cataraqui Source Protection Committee (“SP Committee”) to commence formal consultation on the draft source protection plan for the Cataraqui area.

Background

Ontario Regulation 287/07 under the *Clean Water Act, 2006* sets out a detailed process for the preparation of source protection plans. The multi-year development of a plan for the Cataraqui area is now moving into the final “consultation” phase of that process. Thus far only one of the 19 source protection area/regions across Ontario has made this step (Lakehead Source Protection Area – see <http://www.sourceprotection.net/>).

Laying the Groundwork: Presentations to Municipal Councils

The round of presentations to local municipal councils is going well. Six of the 15 presentations have been delivered by SP Committee members and CRCA staff (most recently at the Township of Leeds and the Thousand Islands, City of Kingston, and the Township of South Frontenac). Representatives from the adjacent source protection regions are reviewing the draft materials for shared municipalities and they are attending some of the applicable meetings. Additional presentations are scheduled for next week at the Township of Athens, Township of Front of Yonge and Township of Rideau Lakes.

The ‘grand tour’ of municipalities is fostering valuable dialogue with councils and staff, as well as media coverage. It is serving as a bridge between our earlier engagement/pre-consultation work and the upcoming posting. The visits will be largely completed by the intended publication date for the draft plan in late February, and hopefully they will have laid the groundwork for positive discussions going forward.

Revised Schedule for Developing the Source Protection Plan

A revised schedule for the local source protection plan was shared in my report for the January 19th meeting. As a reminder, the key timing in the schedule for SP Committee business is as follows:

- Publication of the draft plan and explanatory document - late February (target = 22nd);
- Three public open houses – week of March 19th;
- Comment request date – April 12th (about 50 days following publication);
- SP Committee meeting to review comments – April 12th;
- SP Committee meeting to discuss a proposed version – May 10th.

Please note that there would be no regular meeting held in March due to the active consultation period and open houses.

Staff recommend that a tentative date for an SP Committee meeting in June 2012 be set at this time. Ideally it would occur in the days leading up to a proposed Cataraqui Source Protection Authority meeting (Wednesday June 27th). The purposes of the meeting would be: (1) to discuss comments received by the Source Protection Authority on the “proposed” version of the plan, and if necessary, (2) to draft a letter of interpretation/response for review by the Source Protection Authority and Minister. An on-line poll will be conducted to help select a date in June that is available for a majority of members.

Consultation Materials

Good progress is being made on the draft documents, and staff appreciate the recent comments provided by SP Committee members, Ministry and municipal staff and our colleagues from adjacent source protection regions. We also circulated draft covering materials following your January 19th meeting, and received some helpful suggestions for minor improvements to those items. As discussed, the interested community roundtable participants and the SWITCH organization have been added to the consultation list.

Public Open Houses

Final details are coming together for evening events in the eastern, central and western parts of the Cataraqui area. The public open houses are being structured on a guest speaker / theme basis to attract larger audiences, while still ensuring that community members have plenty of opportunity to voice their opinions about the draft policies, per the intent of Ontario Regulation 287/07. Consistent with the project budget, it is recommended that up to three (3) SP Committee members attend each public open house as official representatives. A sign-up sheet with the date and location of each event will be prepared for your meeting next week.

Recommendation

WHEREAS a draft source protection plan and explanatory document have been prepared for the Cataraqui Source Protection Area in accordance with the Ontario *Clean Water Act, 2006* and associated regulations;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Cataraqui Source Protection Committee approves the publication of a Draft Source Protection Plan: Cataraqui Source Protection Area and accompanying Explanatory Document for review and comment, per the circulation from CRCA staff on February 2, 2012 (and as amended through subsequent discussion at the February 9, 2012 meeting).

Staff look forward to meeting with you again next week.

Respectfully submitted,

(original signed by)

Rob McRae MCIP, RPP
Project Manager, Source Water Protection



Gas spill cases on rise

By Robin Harvey/For The Whig-Standard Posted January 27, 2012

ROBLIN — A gasoline spill from a filling station and variety store has tainted the drinking water and groundwater in this hamlet 15 minutes north of Napanee.

Provincial environment ministry officials say the gasoline contamination, above acceptable and in some cases at hazardous levels, was first detected in September and even though cleanup efforts have been ongoing, new cases of contamination are still being detected.

“The ministry recently conducted further testing and determined that a number of additional properties, including the local community centre, are now also impacted to varying degrees by hydrocarbon contamination,” the ministry’s David Arnott wrote in response to questions.

“The ministry has completed additional testing this week and is awaiting results.”

The local community centre was closed before the new year.

It’s one of 13 properties currently impacted by hydrocarbon contamination.

Public health officials have become involved and residents affected by the spill have received letters telling them not to drink the water, wash dishes in it or consume it in any manner.

Station owner Geet Joshi purchased the filling station in May 2011, and says he complied with all government tests and requirements to ensure the station was safe.

A spokesperson for the Technical Standards and Safety Authority said gas stations and their tanks and equipment must be inspected to get a new owner. They also get regular inspections while they in operation to ensure their safety, he said.

The authority’s Fuels Safety Program administers the Technical Standards and Safety Act, providing fuel-related safety services associated with the safe transportation, storage, handling and use of hydrocarbon fuels (such as gasoline, diesel, propane and natural gas).

In September the ministry ordered Joshi to provide treated water to impacted homeowners and to install water treatment units in all homes that were affected.

“The owner of the gas station has complied and the water treatment units have been installed,” Arnott wrote.

“A consulting firm retained by the owner’s insurance company is assessing and remediating the impacts from the spill. The remediation work is ongoing.”

Joshi says since then he has had no gasoline at the station.

“I took off all (the) gasoline including (the) tanks,” he said.

After almost five months without any gasoline on the premises Joshi says he’s been told water at some houses located north of his station are affected.

The earlier contamination was at homes to the south of his store.

“I have all the results for the water samples, which indicate that gasoline is decreasing from the water from my place (to all the initially affected homes).”

He says he has not been given clear answers as to how the spill happened and why it is still affecting homes. Residents want a community meeting with government and health officials also to get more answers. They want to know why all residents were not told to stop drinking the water during the ongoing “remediation” of the spill and while water testing was being done in stages.

Though they could test their wells themselves, normal testing only detects bacteria. Specialized tests are required to detect gasoline contamination.

Residents also want answers about how the spill occurred and why the government agencies in place to inspect and protect communities from such hazards were unable to prevent it.

The environment ministry has sampled the Salmon River but found no signs of contamination.

robinharvey@live.com



Village-wide water testing looms

By Robin Harvey/For The Whig-Standard Posted January 30, 2012

ROBLIN — Everyone in this village will have their drinking water tested or retested for petrochemical and gasoline contamination, local public health officials say.

A previous serious oil spill across the street from the filling station and variety store thought to be the main source of recent gasoline contamination in the water of 13 structures partly prompted the call to test the entire village and retest homes already tested.

“There’s nothing simple going on in Roblin now, but we have ameliorated any human health risk,” said Ed Gardner, manager of the environmental health team for Kingston Frontenac Lennox and Addington Public Health.

Provincial environment ministry officials said last week gasoline contamination, above acceptable and in some cases at hazardous levels, was first detected in September.

Even though cleanup efforts have been ongoing, new cases of contamination are still being detected.

Gardner said the health unit has also called for a public forum to address residents’ concerns once the entire area has been tested.

The forum will address what can be done in the long term to reassure residents water quality will be maintained.

“These reasonable questions demand reasonable answers,” he said. “It is the right thing to do when we have something to tell them. The health unit is operating in a supporting role.

“We can’t keep saying, ‘Don’t drink your water.’ ”

After alerting homes with water affected by the gasoline spill throughout the fall, in late December, the health unit learned of petrochemical contaminants in the local community hall, which was ordered to close.

This contamination, however, “ran countercurrent to where hydrogeologists said (the gas spill from the filling station) should have gone,” Gardner said.

Throughout January more tests found more contaminated homes.

“We said, this is kind of out of the way,” Gardner said. “(It’s) not downstream and north of the spill and we were not sure if it was connected to the gas bar or the (home heating oil) spill earlier.

“So we asked to have new tests conducted on everybody through the whole area around Roblin again.”

When water is contaminated with petrochemicals, besides being unsafe to drink, it is unsafe to wash with, he said. The chemicals can become airborne in hot water, while a person is taking a shower, for instance, and can be inhaled. They can also be absorbed through the skin.

Gardner said he understands how the frustration of people in the community because such spills can take a long time to resolve.

“What I can say to you is, as soon as we were made aware of any human health risk our inspectors were out there talking to residents or if they were not home, leaving residents letters,” Gardner said.

“Now, given the scope of events, we will be having a public forum to look into and answer questions about the past, present and future.”

robinharvey@live.com