



A NEWSLETTER FOR MUNICIPAL COUNCILLORS
December 2007

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Now Under One Roof!

After a brief interruption in early December, the RVCA is back in business at its new headquarters at 3889 Rideau Valley Drive just north of Manotick. The best thing is that all RVCA and partnership services are now merged under one roof – rather than the previous seven. One building, one phone number, one fax – one point of contact!

- ▶ Rideau Valley Conservation Foundation
- ▶ Rideau Valley Conservation Authority
- ▶ Ottawa Septic System Office
- ▶ LandOwner Resource Centre
- ▶ Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Office
- ▶ Ottawa Stewardship Council
(Joffre Côté – Ministry of Natural Resources)

 Visit: 3889 Rideau Valley Drive
 (corner of Prince of Wales & Rideau Valley Drive)
 Mail: P.O. Box 599, 3889 Rideau Valley Drive, Manotick, Ontario K4M 1A5
 Phone: 613-692-3571 or 1-800-267-3504
 Fax: 613-692-0831
 E-mail: postmaster@rvca.ca
 www.rvca.ca

Mississippi-Rideau Source Protection Committee Selection

A demonstration by the Ontario Landowners Association (OLA) was held at our headquarters on December 20. This peaceful OLA action was prompted by the appointment of two agricultural members to the local Source Protection Committee (SPC) through a process which the OLA does not agree with. Mississippi Valley Conservation and RVCA do not share the OLA point of view. The Conservation Authorities are strongly of the

opinion that the selection and appointment of 15 people to our local SPC is an outstanding example of open, community-minded democracy in action.

For more details, visit the Source Water Protection website at www.mrsourcewater.ca. or give CHARLES a call at extension 1116.

“Enforcing” Environmental Rules

From time to time, RVCA is obliged to undertake an active enforcement role in protecting the public interest and the water environment of our valley. We have staff members trained and able to act as Provincial Offence Officers when necessary in three delegated areas:

- Unauthorized activities under the “Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses” regulation
- Unauthorized activities on CA-owned lands, and
- Illegal activities related to private sewage systems where an agreement exists between RVCA and a member municipality to administer that part of the *Building Code* on their behalf.

Staff will act when all other avenues of agreement such as sharing information, negotiation, discussion of mitigation measures and peer pressure have all failed in order to avoid the offensive work or behaviour.

In the Fall of 2007 for example, a local septic contractor and hauler was fined \$6,000 after being found guilty of doing work without a building permit and installing a septic system that did not meet the prescribed minimum distance from the high groundwater table. The homeowner and the contractor were charged on two counts for completing work without a building permit and for installing a system which did not meet the requirements of the *Ontario Building Code*. The Justice of the Peace found the contractor guilty on both counts and imposed the \$6,000 fine. A new system is also being installed at the property owner’s expense.

In another case last year, a local developer and contractor pleaded guilty and were fined \$4,500 for Alterations to a Watercourse (a tributary of Cardinal Creek in east end Ottawa) for work carried out beyond the limit of the RVCA permit.

A property owner was also found guilty in Perth Provincial Court after a trial involving the “Alteration” of Grants Creek was completed. The Conservation Authority provided information to the court which proved that the property owner illegally dumped rocks into the creek thereby altering the flow. The Justice of the Peace issued an order to remove the obstruction.

A homeowner and her “construction agent” were jointly charged in a “renovation” scenario along the Rideau River near Manotick which resulted in additional living space being constructed beyond the approved work. The Court Action resulted in a resolution which included a further building restriction on the deed of this and the neighbouring property (owned by the accused) and a \$3,000 fine.

In all cases, RVCA works closely with associated agencies with complementary powers including the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of the Environment, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and our member municipalities.

The vast majority of RVCA regulatory work does not involve “enforcement” at all.

RVCA Meeting Dates, Board of Directors and Advisory Board Agendas, Minutes (after approval), *Watershed Briefs* and Media Releases are available on our website at www.rideauvalley.on.ca.

☎ 613 692 3571
☎ 800 267 3504
☎ 613 692 0831

