

News Release

NO METERS ON WELLS AROUND HERE

MANOTICK, June 15, 2006 — Despite rumours to the contrary, the Mississippi-Rideau Source Water Protection team has no plans to install meters on private residential wells and does not support this idea.

“There is no mention of metering private wells in the proposed *Clean Water Act*,” says Brian Stratton, Project Manager for the Mississippi-Rideau team. “The intent of the proposed *Clean Water Act* is to protect our sources of drinking water.”

The unfounded rumour about meters on private wells has been around for some time. Last December, Laurel Broten, Minister of the Environment responded to a question in the legislature regarding this issue. “As I indicated during broad consultations across the province, we made it clear then, and I want to repeat it now, that our government has no interest in installing meters on private residential wells. We do want to ensure that all Ontarians across the province have clean, plentiful and safe drinking water and that’s what the *Clean Water Act* is all about.”

The rumour still comes up from time to time in telephone calls from concerned citizens and in meetings where Source Water Protection and the *Clean Water Act* are discussed.

Following the tragedy in Walkerton in May 2000, legislation to protect source water was developed with input from many sectors including municipalities, the farming community and Ontario’s Conservation Authorities. Second reading of the proposed *Clean Water Act* is now complete and Standing Committee hearings will begin shortly to gather further public input and review each section of the legislation. In the meantime, Conservation Authorities, including the Mississippi-Rideau team, have begun collecting and assessing scientific data that will be required to develop a plan to protect local sources of drinking water.

Under the proposed *Clean Water Act*, municipalities, Conservation Authorities, landowners, industry, businesses, farmers, community groups and the public would collaborate to develop a workable, effective plan to address local risks to drinking water. These plans will be based on local scientific information and will suit the needs of the local community.

“Source water protection plans will be developed locally. A local committee made up of local watershed representatives will create the plan with input from all sectors and the public. Although the plan will be science-based, it will have to be economically feasible and broadly supported by our watershed communities,” said Stratton.

Both the Mississippi Valley and the Rideau Valley Conservation Authorities have long histories of working with landowners, farmers and municipalities in a mutually-acceptable and respectful way and that is not going to change.

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