

# Working with Other Government Agencies

## *Working with Municipalities*

This information sheet serves to provide guidance and direction to Source Protection Committee (SPC) Chairs on working with other government agencies. There are information sheets for each level of government -municipal, provincial government, federal government, First Nations and other jurisdictions (Quebec/United States). Each information sheet offers direction/advice on working with different government agencies in relation to preparing the terms of reference (TOR), the assessment report (AR) and the source protection plan (SPP).

### **Introduction**

The *Clean Water Act* protects municipal drinking water; therefore municipalities are key partners in the process. Each source protection committee will have municipal representation; however there are legislative requirements to negotiate and consult with all municipalities in the source protection area throughout the process.

Municipalities will vary across the province in terms of resources and technical expertise available to contribute to the source protection process –therefore flexibility has been built into the process to support varying municipal capacity (Source Protection Authority (SPA) can undertake technical work, collaborative agreements can be worked out or municipalities may choose to lead technical work and development of responses to threats). Municipal nominees on the SPC are expected to have a role in advising the SPC on how to work effectively with all municipalities in the watershed.

Considering that it is vitally important for municipalities to understand their role in source protection early on, and to be able to prepare for it, the committee may wish to have an initial meeting with each municipality in your source protection area/region to explain the requirements of the CWA and enlist their active participation in the process.

The guidebook prepared for municipalities entitled *The Clean Water Act 2006: Promoting municipal awareness and understanding* will provide insight into the considerations and challenges municipalities will encounter as they work through the source water protection planning process.

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### **Terms of Reference**

The TOR regulation requires that the clerks of municipalities located in the source protection area be notified and municipalities invited to participate in the development of the TOR.

Consideration could be given to contacting municipal departments in addition to the clerks to more directly inform the people who are currently working on water for the municipality who may participate. The municipal representatives on the SPC could assist in this regard. The SPA may already have established working relationships with municipal staff; use of existing relationships is encouraged.

Relevant employees can be found in the following municipal departments:

- Public Works
- Environmental Services
- Water & Waste Water Services
- Community Design and Development Services
- Planning

In most circumstances, the department heads would be the point of contact and they will assign appropriate staff.

Smaller municipalities may not have staff with the technical expertise and may depend on the SPA to undertake technical work. Municipalities with some expertise and resources may enter into a collaborative agreement with the SPA to create efficiencies by working closely together. Others with significant expertise and resources may choose to lead the technical work and develop responses to threats.

### **Assessment Report**

The SPC must consult with municipalities in developing the assessment report. The AR regulation may require clerks of municipalities located in the source protection area to be provided a copy of the AR once it is finalized so that municipalities can review and comment on it. The municipal contacts for the AR may be the same as the TOR or could include more of the technical staff at the municipality, including:

- Hydrogeologists,
- Watershed planners/specialists
- Information management specialists

### **Source Protection Plan**

The SPC must consult with municipalities in developing the SPP. Municipalities will ultimately have to include SPP policies in their municipal planning documents so it will be imperative to include planners from each municipality in the discussion and development of the SPP.