

Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program

Protect our water. Get funding to upgrade or inspect your septic system.

Do you have an old septic system on your property in need of upgrades? Or is it time for you to inspect your septic system? You may be eligible for funding to upgrade or inspect your septic system if you live near a municipal well or water intake. The Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program will cover up to 80 per cent of the cost of an eligible project, to a maximum of \$7,000. If you have an advanced septic system, the program will increase this coverage to a maximum of \$15,000.

Why are old or faulty septic systems a problem?

Septic systems that are not regularly inspected or poorly maintained can be a significant pathway for contaminants to enter drinking water. Regularly inspecting and properly upgrading your septic system will benefit you and protect your municipality's drinking water.

How do I know there is a problem with my septic system?

The seven key signs of problems with septic systems are:

- a backed-up or slow moving toilet or drain
- foul odours
- an overflow of sewage around your septic system
- unusually thick grass and tree roots growing in or around the septic system and the surrounding ground is soggy and soft
- dosing pumps run constantly or do not run at all
- well water tests indicates high levels of nitrates, bacteria, or other contaminants
- large amounts of algae growth in or around nearby lakes or ponds

Am I eligible for funding?

Yes, if your property is within or extends into the following eligible areas:

- 100-metre radius of a municipal wellhead
- 200-metre radius of a surface water intake
- the two-year time-of-travel around a municipal wellhead, approved by the local municipality, or
- the intake protection zone-one (IPZ-1) around a surface water intake, approved by the local municipality

What projects are funded?

- replacing septic tanks and leaching beds
- replacing holding tanks
- pumping septic tanks
- adding plumbing connections
- transferring wastewater to septic tanks and/or leaching beds
- connecting to a municipal sewer line and decommissioning the existing septic system

What costs can I recover?

- required permits and approvals for any eligible project
- purchased materials and supplies
- contract labour
- professional fees and technical support
- fees for related design, inspection and construction
- fees to connect to a municipal sewer line

How can I apply for this funding and learn more?

You can learn more and apply for funding by contacting your local conservation authority at:

http://conservation-ontario.on.ca/source_protection/CWAFundEarlyActions.htm

You can learn more about the Clean Water Act at www.ontario.ca/cleanwater

Any tips on how to keep my septic system working properly?

- ensure your septic system is inspected regularly by a licensed professional
- repair any damages to your septic system
- ensure your water well is also inspected regularly by a licensed professional

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