WATER AND WASTEWATER UPDATE
TOWN OF ST. MARYS

SODIUM IN DRINKING WATER

Sodium in the Town of St. Marys water supply is naturally occurring and is mostly attributed to the nature of the bedrock in the surrounding area. Sodium is an essential ion in bodily fluids. It is not harmful at normal levels of intake from food and drinking water sources, and drinking water is generally a minor source of total sodium intake.

However, increased intake of sodium may cause problems for people on sodium restricted diets, and as such, it is important for these residents to be aware of sodium levels found within the Drinking Water Supply for the Town of St. Marys. The aesthetic objective for sodium in drinking water is 200 mg/L, however physicians are made aware of sodium levels in excess of 20 mg/L so that it may be communicated to people on sodium restricted diets. The latest analytical results for the Town of St. Marys sodium levels ranged from 32.4 mg/L to 61.1 mg/L. These values are still well below the aesthetic objective for sodium, however those on sodium restricted diets should be aware that the Drinking Water Supply for the Town of St. Marys has slightly elevated naturally occurring sodium levels. For more information on how sodium can affect you, please contact the Perth District Health Unit at 519-271-7600, or your local physician.

SODIUM QUICK FACTS

- Sodium is highly soluble and often found naturally in groundwater
- In water, sodium has no smell or colour, but at high enough concentrations can give water a salty taste
- The Canadian Drinking Water Quality guideline for sodium is an Aesthetic Objective of less than or equal to 200 mg/L

INFLOW & INFILTRATION
(WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM)

The Town of St. Marys is continuing its efforts to reduce the amount of Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) entering the wastewater collection (sanitary) system. I&I occurs when “clean” water (i.e. groundwater, surface water, stormwater, etc.) enters the wastewater collection system through aging infrastructure, illegal connections such as sump pumps and rain leader downspouts, requiring treatment at the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP). By controlling I&I and eliminating illegal connections, the Town can improve operating procedures, potentially reducing operating, maintenance and capital expenses.

In 2015, the Town of St. Marys is planning to complete (pending approval) the next step in the I&I program, which consists of a town-wide sanitary smoke test. The “smoke” used is non-toxic, but will fill the sanitary collection system with “smoke”, which will then be released through openings in the system such as illegal connections, sump pumps, rain leaders (eaves troughs), improperly maintained sanitary clean outs and aging infrastructure.

This program will identify the majority of inflow connections conveying stormwater to the sanitary collection system. Advertisements will notify residents when the program is to start.

PROTECTING OUR WATER SUPPLY
(SOURCE WATER PROTECTION)

In 2006, the Ontario Government passed the Clean Water Act to help protect existing and future sources of drinking water. The Clean Water Act is part of the Multi Barrier Approach to drinking water safety which has been put in place across the province, with Source Water Protection acting as the First Step to Safe Water.

The Source Water Protection Plan (DRAFT) for the Thames Sydenham & Region has been submitted to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) for approval. The Town of St. Marys is expecting this plan to be approved later in 2015.

Source Protection Plans identify risks to local drinking water sources and develop ways to reduce, or eliminate these risks.

Property owners whom engage in prescribed activities within vulnerable areas will need to work with the Town and Conservation Authorities to put measures in place to reduce or eliminate the risks associated with those activities.

Extensive communication with property owners has been completed as the plans were developed, and will continue as the Town moves towards implementation.

ONTARIO CANADA
ST. MARYS

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