
Water Well Improvement Program

1.0 Background:

Most rural Ontarians rely on well water for their private water supply. When wells are old, not properly maintained, or poorly installed, they can be direct pathways for groundwater contamination; this poses a significant risk for our drinking water sources and our health. Decommissioning and upgrading these wells can reduce this risk by limiting these direct pathways.

This program is designed to provide incentive funding for decommissioning and upgrading private wells within the Saugeen watershed. By participating in this program, you are doing your part to protect our local aquifers and drinking water sources.

In Ontario, if a well is not being used or maintained for future use as a well, the owner is legally required under R.R.O 1990, Regulation 903: WELLS of the *Ontario Water Resources Act* to plug and seal the well.

2.0 Eligibility:

In order to be eligible for funding under this program, you must:

- Be a resident of Ontario;
- Be the registered owner of a property within the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority (SVCA) watershed or if your project is on rented land, you must submit a letter from the property owner giving you permission to undertake the project.
- Voluntarily undertake the well decommissioning or upgrade project
- Be in compliance with R.R.O 1990, Regulation 903: WELLS of the *Ontario Water Resources Act*.

Please note that grants are limited to well decommissioning and upgrade projects that will improve or protect our groundwater sources.

You, as the applicant, are responsible to ensure that the project meets all legal requirements including:

- local municipal bylaws
- provincial and regional highway setbacks
- Drainage Act
- Federal and Provincial Acts
- Canada Farm Building Code
- Ontario Building Code
- Planning and regulations of local conservation authority

3.0 Funding:

Funding will be allocated on a first come first serve basis, however, projects that are located within a Municipal Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA) area will take priority, given the higher potential to improve water quality. To find out if your property is located within a WHPA area, use the Source Protection Information Atlas (interactive mapping tool) here: <https://swpip.ca/>

An application for funding to decommission or upgrade a well can be made retroactively for an eligible project completed after June 1, 2020 provided that funding is still available.

For funding specifics, please review the applicable decommission or upgrade project guidelines found on our website.

4.0 How To Apply:

Please complete the well decommissioning or upgrade application form available on our website: www.saugeenconservation.ca.

Once your application has been received, an SVCA staff member will review the application for completeness and contact you to confirm eligibility and next steps. Please note that before and after photographs are required to be eligible for funding.

If you require assistance or are unable to complete the application form online, please contact our Water Quality Technician at 519-364-1255 ext. 226.

For farm properties, the completion of an Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) is required prior to receiving funding. The EFP is delivered locally by Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association in partnership with Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Please visit www.ontariosoilcrop.org or call 1-800-265-9751 for more information about the EFP. Your plan will remain confidential and will not be shared with SVCA staff.

5.0 Licensed Well Contractors:

A directory of licensed well contractors in Ontario can be found here: www.ontario.ca/page/find-licenced-well-contractors

Water Well Improvement Program - Contact Information:

Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority
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