

STAFF REPORT: Engineering & Public Works Department

REPORT TO: Infrastructure and Recreation Committee
MEETING DATE: February 9, 2011
REPORT NO.: EPW.11.009
SUBJECT: Water Opportunities and Water
 Conservation Act
PREPARED BY: John Caswell, Manager of Water & Wastewater
 Services/Asst. Director

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receives Report EPW.11.009 entitled "Water Opportunities and Water Conservation Act" for their information.

B. Background

On November 23, 2010 the Ontario legislature passed Bill 72, the new Water Opportunities and Water Conservation Act. The Act is designed to promote better water technologies and practices, create clean technology jobs and encourage conservation of Ontario water resources. The Act is not intended to promote privatization of water utilities.

The Act will set up a Water Technology Acceleration Project, (WaterTAP) a non-Crown corporation intended as a MaRs-type incubator/forum for water/wastewater technologies. MaRs is an organization that promotes science, technology and innovation.

The new Act will require municipalities to prepare water sustainability plans, including asset management, financial plan, water conservation plan, risk assessment and customer service strategies. The regulations of the Act will be forthcoming in the near future.

The Ministry of Environment (MOE) will be able to set water indicators and targets for municipalities, and to require them to measure and report on their performance. Other public agencies may also be required to plan for, and achieve, water conservation targets. Other rules will require greater transparency in municipal water bills, and will require triennial progress reports.

The remaining parts of Bill 72 amend existing legislation relating to water use. For example, the Building Code must be reviewed now, every five years from a water conservation point of view. The Ontario Clean Water Agency will now finance and promote, water/wastewater technologies, inside and outside Ontario. The Ontario Water Resources Act will now include authority to make regulations on water conservation and water efficiency standards.

Many municipalities have been working towards achieving accreditation for the Drinking Water Quality Management Standard (DWQMS) and have implemented a number of items that will be required by this new legislation. The Town of The Blue Mountains has received a Drinking Water Works Permit and License, and Staff will review and implement any requirements of the new regulations as they are forthcoming to ensure compliance with this Act.

C. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan

Town's Strategic Plan Goal # 6 "Providing a strong well managed municipal government" is in part satisfied by the recommended action.

D. Environmental Impacts

The Water Conservation and Water Opportunities Act will promote the wise use of water and new technologies for producing water and therefore assist in reducing water consumption.

E. Budget Impact

None

F. Attached

None.

Respectfully submitted,

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