

Province of Ontario 2019 Water Conservation and Efficiency Program Assessment

1. Lead agency and contact person:

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2. Status of goals and objectives

In 2012 Ontario adopted water conservation and efficiency goals and objectives that are consistent with the Basin-wide goals and objectives. The goals and objectives were developed based on stakeholder consultation, Indigenous engagement, and public comments received.

Ontario adopted the water conservation and efficiency goals as set out in the Agreement, and developed objectives consistent with the regional objectives adopted for the Basin that are tailored for Ontario to reflect the direction in the Water Opportunities and Water Conservation Act, 2010, and to address stakeholder and Indigenous community requests to emphasize the importance of taking ecological water needs into account in decision making, in keeping with the broader ecosystem protection and restoration goals of the Agreement.

Ontario's water conservation goals and objectives are available at:

<http://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/ontarios-water-conservation-and-efficiencygoals-objectives-and-programs>

3. Water conservation and efficiency program overview

Ontario's water conservation and efficiency program consists of a wide variety of statutes, programs and policies administered across several Ontario ministries, as well as local governments and other organizations.

The foundation of the program is the *Ontario Water Resources Act* and the *Water Taking and Transfer Regulation* (Ontario Regulation 387/04). The purpose of the *Ontario Water Resources Act* is to provide for the conservation, protection and management of Ontario's waters and for their efficient and sustainable use, in order to promote Ontario's long-term environmental, social and economic well-being.

Section 34.1 (9)(h) of the OWRA provides a permitting Director with authority to set terms and conditions on a permit governing the use and conservation of water taken under the permit, including requiring the holder to implement specified measures to promote the efficient use of the water or reduce the loss of water through consumptive use, conduct a water audit, and to prepare and implement a water conservation plan. In addition, section 76(1)(b.1) of the OWRA provides regulation making authority requiring the taking of measures by permit and non-permit holders to promote the conservation of water, including the preparation and implementation of water conservation plans and other measures to promote the efficient use of water or reduce the loss of water through consumptive use.

The *Water Taking and Transfer Regulation* outlines matters that the Director must consider when considering an application for a Permit to Take Water. Section 4(2).3.i. of the Regulation requires that the Director consider issues relating to the use of water, including whether water conservation measures are being implemented or are proposed to be implemented in the use of water, in accordance with best water management standards and practices for the relevant sector if these are available.

Provincial land use planning statutes such as the *Planning Act*, policies such as the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2014* and plans such as the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* require the consideration of water conservation in new development. The *Clean Water Act* requires that any significant threats to municipal drinking water sources from a water quantity perspective be identified through the preparation of water budgets and addressed in source protection plans, such as through policies on water conservation.

The *Water Opportunities and Water Conservation Act, 2010* is an important component of Ontario’s water conservation and efficiency program builds upon Ontario’s expertise in clean water technology and sets out a framework to make the province a continental leader in water innovation to help address global water challenges. Among other things, the Act sets the framework to encourage Ontarians to use water more efficiently by creating and implementing innovative approaches to protecting and conserving water resources for current and future generations.

4. Consistency with Regional Objectives

Ontario’s program is consistent with the regional objectives in the promotion of environmentally sound and economically feasible water conservation measures.

REGIONAL OBJECTIVE	LEGISLATIVE AND PROGRAM SUMMARIES
1) Guide programs toward long-term sustainable water use and management.	<p>Ontario implements a range of adaptive programs and conservation and efficiency strategies that consider long-term sustainable water use taking into account the importance of water to related ecosystems. Implementation occurs through the assessment of water taking applications under the <i>Ontario Water Resources Act</i> and the preparation of source protection plans under the <i>Clean Water Act</i> to protect existing and future sources of drinking water in terms of both water quantity and quality, development of water budgets to estimate surface and groundwater supplies, water use and water quantity risk assessments, and action to protect the Great Lakes.</p> <p>2019 update – Ontario’s Environment Plan</p> <p>In November 2018, the Made in Ontario Environment Plan environment plan was released to help protect our air, land and water, address litter and reduce waste, support Ontarians to continue to do their share to reduce greenhouse gas emissions,</p>

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	<p>and help communities and families prepare for climate change. Ontario continues to implement the commitments in this plan.</p> <p>https://www.ontario.ca/page/made-in-ontario-environment-plan</p> <p>2019 update - Ontario Water Resources Act and Regulations</p> <p>Over the past year, the province has reviewed, and continues to review, the state of water resources in key areas of Ontario and the effect water takings have on these resources. This includes reviewing water quantity-related policies and programs as they apply to water takers across the province, including water bottlers taking groundwater, as well as enhancing our understanding of how we can manage water takings to ensure we have sustainable water resources in the face of changing climate and continued population growth.</p> <p>The Taking Ground Water to Produce Bottled Water Regulation (Ontario Regulation 463/16) established a moratorium on new or increased permits for groundwater by water bottling facilities. The province proposed to extend this moratorium for nine months, ending October 1, 2020, to give the ministry time to complete its analysis of the water quantity review and to publicly consult on and finalize changes to how we manage water takings before the moratorium ends. This way, we can be confident our programs, policies and science protect vital water resources while keeping Ontario open for business. Our proposal to extend the moratorium was made available for comment on the Environmental Registry from November 18 to December 18, 2019.</p>
<p>2) Adopt and implement supply and demand management to promote efficient use and conservation of water resources.</p>	<p>Ontario has a range of programs that manage water supply and demand to achieve efficient use and conservation of water resources — including promoting innovative water technologies through WaterTAP established under the <i>Water Opportunities and Water Conservation Act</i> and establishing water efficiency standards in Ontario’s Building Code and <i>Electricity Act</i>.</p> <p>Under the <i>Planning Act</i>, the Ontario Government approves policy statements and provincial plans which must adhere to by local planning authorities. Ontario’s <i>Provincial Policy Statement, 2018</i> requires local planning authorities to protect, improve or restore the quality and quantity of water by, among other things “planning for efficient and sustainable use of water resources, through practices for water conservation and sustaining water quality” Provincial plans also require water conservation plans and promote green infrastructure in municipal stormwater</p>

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	<p>management by municipalities in the Oak Ridges Moraine and Lake Simcoe areas.</p> <p>2019 update - Reporting of Energy Consumption and Water Use regulation under the <i>Electricity Act</i>.</p> <p>As of January 1, 2019, the Large Building Energy and Water Reporting and Benchmarking program will require commercial, multi-unit residential and some industrial buildings that are 100,000 square feet or larger to annually report their energy and water consumption and GHG emissions to the Ministry of Energy, Northern Development and Mines. The information will allow building owners to benchmark their consumption data against other similar buildings.</p> <p>https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/180506</p> <p>https://www.ontario.ca/page/report-energy-water-use-large-buildings</p>
<p>3) Improve monitoring and standardize data reporting among State and Provincial water conservation and efficiency programs.</p>	<p>In addition to water reporting requirements under Ontario's Permit to Take Water program, a range of Ontario programs and initiatives support improved monitoring and standardized data reporting related to water supply, water use and conservation/efficiency. This includes: Ontario Surface Water Monitoring and Low Water Response, the Provincial Groundwater Monitoring Network, management of Ontario's foundation geospatial datasets and analysis to support decisions about water resources, and the Ontario Geological Survey's Groundwater Mapping Initiative.</p>
<p>4) Develop science, technology and research.</p>	<p>Ontario has a number of agencies, organizations, programs and strategies that promote and cultivate science, technology and research to implement the best in water, wastewater and stormwater technology, and support innovation and adoption of water conservation approaches. These include: Ontario Clean Water Agency, Water Technology Acceleration Project (WaterTAP), Southern Ontario Water Consortium, Green Focus on Innovation and Technology, Investment Accelerator Fund, Ministry of Agriculture Food, and Rural Affairs-University of Guelph Agreement Research Program and New Directions Research Program, and Ontario's Cleantech Strategy.</p>
<p>5) Develop education programs and information</p>	<p>Ontario is implementing a range of education programs and other programs that raise awareness of the importance of water and the value of conservation, efficiency and cost-saving, and which promote the sharing of best management practices, including: the Walkerton Clean Water Centre which fosters</p>

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sharing for all water users.	leading-edge drinking water technologies and delivers education, information and advice to drinking water operators across Ontario on issues including water conservation; water efficiency labelling through partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Water Sense Program; as well as funding support and environmental planning programs for water conservation and efficiency in the agricultural sector.
Other programs:	<p>In accordance with Ontario’s water conservation and efficiency goals, objectives, the provinces water conservation and efficiency program includes a range of environmental and resource management legislation, strategies and programs that aligns with these objectives by integrating water conservation and efficient water use with other environmental management practices and considerations such as energy use, climate change, and the protection and restoration of hydrological and ecological integrity. This includes <i>Ontario’s Great Lakes Protection Act</i> and Great Lakes Strategy, Ontario Parks Water Conservation Initiatives, the Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health, as well as various fisheries, biodiversity, habitat, nutrients and wetlands related initiatives.</p> <p>2019 Update - Canada-Ontario Agreement on Great Lakes Water Quality and Ecosystem Health</p> <p>COA is the principal mechanism through which Ontario and Canada coordinate their work to address their respective and shared commitments to restore, protect and conserve the Great Lakes. The current COA was signed in 2014 and supports Ontario’s implementation of the Great Lakes Strategy and Canada’s commitments under the 2012 Canada-U.S. Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement.</p> <p>The current COA expires in December 2019 and if a new COA is not yet in place when the current COA expires, Canada and Ontario are committed to continuing collaborative work on Great Lakes restoration while a new COA is finalized.</p> <p>www.ontario.ca/page/canada-ontario-great-lakes-agreement https://www.ontario.ca/page/canada-ontario-lake-erie-action-plan</p> <p>2019 Update – Ontario’s Great Lakes Strategy</p> <p>The <i>Great Lakes Protection Act (GLPA), 2015</i> strengthens the province’s ability to restore and protect the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River, as well as the waterways that flow into them. Ontario’s Great Lakes Strategy was first released in 2012. The</p>

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	<p>GLPA requires Ontario to report on progress made under Ontario's Great Lakes Strategy every three years. Ontario is also required to undertake a review of its Great Lakes Strategy every six years. A review of the Great Lakes Strategy is currently underway. In preparing a new Great Lakes Strategy, Ontario will explore made-in-Ontario solutions to protect the waters of the Great Lakes basin and keep the Great Lakes clean for future generations, while supporting a prosperous economy.</p> <p>https://www.ontario.ca/page/protecting-great-lakes https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/15g24</p>

5. Ontario's water conservation and efficiency program implementation timeline and status

Ontario's water conservation and efficiency program is in place and being implemented.