

# Our water is worth it!

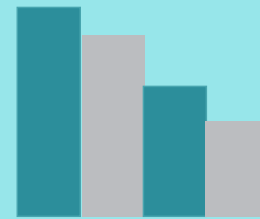
We can't live without fresh, clean water, and Durham residents are fortunate to live next to the largest supply of fresh water in the world! About 95 per cent of Durham's municipal tap water comes from Lake Ontario. The rest comes from Lake Simcoe and underground sources. As the operator of Durham Region's municipal water supply and wastewater treatment systems, the Works Department plays a

key role in managing our water resources in a sustainable and responsible way. Working with local conservation authorities, residents and businesses, the Region of Durham places a priority on sustainable water management. Durham Region is part of a group of municipalities from Canada and the United States taking part in a pilot program organized by the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Cities Initiative to improve and sustain our freshwater resources. Water stewardship is everyone's responsibility!

1

## Conserving water

- Durham residents are doing their part! In the past 10 years, household water use has declined by 20 per cent while the population grew by 16 per cent. Learn more about conserving water at home by visiting [www.durham.ca/waterefficiency](http://www.durham.ca/waterefficiency).
- The Region is improving water infrastructure so it is sustainable and efficient. Since 2005, 8,000 leak-prone polybutylene water service connections have been replaced.



2

## Working together

- Durham Region helps fund and works with five local conservation authorities to protect our 32 watersheds. Community members are also engaged in helping to protect our watersheds
- The Durham Region Roundtable on Climate Change is working with local partners to develop a strategy to significantly increase tree cover
- The Durham Environmental Advisory Committee annually recognizes individual efforts and group projects that protect and enhance our environment, such as stream bank and shoreline restoration projects.



3

## Enjoying our waterfronts

- 268 km of the 350 km Regional trail network provides access to Durham waterways and shorelines including the Lake Ontario Waterfront Trail, Rouge Valley National Urban Park, Darlington Provincial Park, conservation areas and municipal parks.



4

## Preventing pollution

- Durham's 11 water pollution control plants are designed to prevent human waste from entering our local bodies of water.
- The Region has identified protection areas around all 23 Regional wells and six lake-based water intakes to protect the water supply and continuously monitor for pollution.
- In 2013 the Region held 14 special waste collection events, attracting almost 1400 drop-offs, diverting 8 tonnes of hazardous household waste and 34 tonnes of e-waste, preventing it from potentially being poured down a drain or buried in landfill.



5

## Protecting our water's future

- 80 per cent of Durham's geographic area is in the Greenbelt and protected from development. The Regional Official Plan contains a forest cover target of 30 per cent. Over the past six years, woodlands have grown from 24 to 27 per cent of the Region's land, helping to slow run off and retain moisture in the soil.
- Durham's groundwater monitoring program tracks water quantity and quality in 115 observation wells across the region. The Region also has current watershed plans for most of Durham's 32 watersheds, including the 27 that flow off the Oak Ridges Moraine.



6

## Preparing for climate change

- Durham's Community Climate Change Local Action Plan is working towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions—a five per cent reduction by 2015, a 20 per cent reduction by 2020 and an 80 per cent reduction by 2050.
- The Region of Durham is committed to constructing new infrastructure with climate change in mind, while working to reduce energy consumption and our overall environmental footprint.
- In 2009, the Region began a corporate climate change program to identify and implement changes in Regional operations.



**What's your water footprint?**

Find out using an on line water calculator such as the one at: [www.home-water-works.org](http://www.home-water-works.org).