

The Manitoba Water Protection Act

Safeguarding our Heritage & our
Future

Manitoba
Water Stewardship



Building for the Future

The Pressures

- Too much water
 - '97 Flood of the Century
 - Deteriorating drainage infrastructure
- Too little water – western drought 2000
- Bad water – Walkerton & North Battleford
- Water threats – Garrison & Devils Lake
- Water trends – Lake Winnipeg nutrients rising

The Opportunities

- 2003 International Water Year
- Unprecedented public interest in water
- MB Water Strategy public consultations
- MB Nutrient Management Strategy
- Lake WPG Management Strategy
- Lake WPG Stewardship Board established
- CEC hearings on WPG Wastewater
- Department of Water Stewardship

The Need

- Water Management Strategy consultations identified need for legislation
 - Gaps in existing statutes
 - Outmoded concepts
 - New approaches not covered
- Legislation 1 of 3 main pillars of the WMS
- Provides clear mandate for Department of Water Stewardship
- Provides the tools to respond to pressures

The Approach

- Focus on major issues raised in WMS
 - Source protection
 - Transparency and inclusiveness
 - Financing
 - Watershed planning
- An enabling statute
- Mandatory transparent regulation development process

The Purpose

- Protect water & aquatic ecosystems recognizing:
 - Economic well-being needs clean water
 - Comprehensive water/land planning on a watershed basis is essential
 - Clean drinking water requires source protection
 - Good science has to be part of the process
 - Riparian areas must be protected

The Statute

- WQ Standards, Guidelines and Objectives
- WQ Management Zones
- Conservation and water shortages
- Watershed Management Plans
- Manitoba Water Council
- Water Stewardship Fund

Water Quality Standards, Guidelines & Objectives

- First Canadian jurisdiction to have these in law
- Numbers developed through Canadian Council of Ministers of Environment
- Regular review and updating (most recent in 2002)
- Binds Province to utilize for licensing
- Enforceable

Water Quality Management Zones

- Province can designate specific areas
- Zones can be established for various purposes – protecting drinking water source, nutrient management, etc.
- Operations/activities can be regulated to specific standards applying only within these zones
- Operations/activities can be prohibited only within these zones



Water Conservation

- Regulations can be developed respecting:
 - Water conservation programs
 - Measures directed at reducing water use
- Government supports the use of non regulatory mechanisms to achieve water conservation.

Watershed Management Plans

- Permits designation of watersheds
- Permits designation of watershed planning authority
- Can require the authority to prepare a plan
- Prescribes matters that must be taken into account in preparing the plan and the content of plans
- Minister must approve the plan
- Public consultation mandatory

Linkages Between Watershed Plans and Land Use Planning

AMENDMENTS TO *THE PLANNING ACT*:

- Section 25 (1) (c) adds to the purposes of a development plan “to serve as a framework for the implementation of an approved watershed plan that relates to land within the district or municipality”
- Section 25 (3) now requires a planning district or municipality to consider any approved watershed management plans when preparing or amending a development plan.
- Section 25 (4) now requires the contents of a development plan contain statements of objectives, and policies respecting the implementation of any approved watershed management plans relevant to the development plan.

Manitoba Water Council

- 5 or more members appointed by OIC
- At direction of the Minister:
 - Monitors development & implementation of watershed plans
 - Advises Minister on water issues
 - Coordinates diverse water-related advisory boards
 - Assists in sustainability reporting for water

Water Stewardship Fund

- First separate trust account for water
- Provides grants for water research
- Provides grants to assist implementation of watershed management plans
- Supports a variety of water management and water quality objectives
- More flexibility than departmental budgeting processes

Serious Water Shortage

- Minister can declare a serious water shortage
- As a result of the declaration the Minister can take emergency action
- The Minister has a duty to communicate the declaration and reasons for actions taken subsequent

Bill 22: The Water Protection Act

➤ Bill 22 can be viewed at:

<http://web2.gov.mb.ca/bills/sess/b022e.php>