

August 25, 2020

To: Owners/Operators of Municipal Drinking Water Systems

Subject: Source Water Protection Planning – AWC’s New Guidance Documents

In 2018, the Government of Alberta partnered with the Alberta Water Council (AWC) to form a multi-sector project team to document existing source water protection (SWP) approaches and provide guidance for protecting sources of drinking water in Alberta. On behalf of Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP), I am pleased to share with you the AWC’s recently published guidance documents: *Protecting Sources of Drinking Water in Alberta: Guide to Source Water Protection Planning (2020)* and a supporting document.

These documents are found here: <https://www.awchome.ca/projects/protecting-sources-drinking-water-alberta-2/>

For an overview of the guide and its applicability, a YouTube video is available: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eiBK9lyKEVM>

Although AEP worked collaboratively with the AWC and the project team on the development of the Guide, SWP is not a mandated plan for development or an operational requirement under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*. We do however encourage SWP planning or related initiatives as a voluntary, collaborative activity to be undertaken with other stakeholders to address risks to your source water areas. The AWC guidance documents are comprehensive and should be a valuable resource should you choose to embark on developing your own SWP plan.

Many drinking water providers recognize the value of SWP to mitigate risk to produce safe, high quality drinking water and minimize the costs of water treatment. Since 2013, drinking water providers regulated by AEP are required to develop their own Drinking Water Safety Plan (DWSP) to meet their particular system needs. DWSPs are intended to address various risks to drinking water systems, namely: source water, treatment, distribution/reservoirs, and customer. Source water protection plans do not replace DWSPs, but are an additional barrier to mitigate risk in combination with DWSPs.

AEP wants to thank the Alberta Water Council for all of the hard work that was required to conduct sector engagement and publish this important guidance document. Subject matter experts from municipalities, industry, non-government organizations and the Government of Alberta collaborated on this project. We hope these SWP guidance documents will serve your needs by supporting an integrated approach to ensuring safe, clean drinking water now and into the future.

If you have questions about the particulars of the SWP guidance documents, please contact Andre Asselin (Executive Director, Alberta Water Council) via aasselin@awc-casa.ca.

For additional information from AEP on how you might consider applying these SWP guiding principles to better manage your source water risks, please contact Morna Hussey, Drinking Water Program Manager, at Morna.Hussey@gov.ab.ca or Phil Boehme, Integrated Resource Planner, at Phil.Boehme@gov.ab.ca.

Thank you,



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