

On Friday October 30th MPWA held a half day Source Water Protection Plan Workshop in Grande Prairie. The presenter for the workshop was Steph Neufeld a Watershed Specialist with EPCOR.

32 people attended the workshop, majority of the people were either from the MPWA board or representatives from the municipalities within our watershed.

The goal was to have the municipalities and stakeholders learn the components of Source Water Protection Planning so they could begin to think about the steps they need to take to start a plan within their municipality.

Throughout the afternoon Steph went into great detail about Land use Mapping, water quality monitoring and assessment, risk assessment and navigating water, land and watershed management frameworks in Alberta from a Municipal perspective.

Steph also went through the 6 fundamental elements that help make a successful program. These elements are relevant to everyone making a Source Water Protection Plan even though location and certain goals will differ between municipalities

The 6 elements are:

- Having a Vision for your Source Water Protection Plan
- Characterizing the Source water and Source Water Protection area
- Having Goals for your Source Water Protection Plan
- Creating an Action Plan
- Implementing the program created
- Having periodic evaluation and revision of your plan

The workshop provided the impetus for some municipalities to begin considering a Source Water Protection Plan and provide resources for those already thinking about it. Grade Cache has started making a Source water Protection Plan however they were not one of the municipalities to attend the workshop.

If anyone wants more information MPWA is willing to hosting another workshop.

For more information or to get a copy of the PowerPoint please contact:

Megan Graham

Ph: 780-324-3355

Email: mpwa.admin@telus.net

Source Water Protection Planning

Hosted by: The Mighty Peace Watershed Alliance

Date & Time: October 30th, 1-5pm

Location: Grande Prairie

Presenter: Steph Neufeld, M.Sc. Watershed Specialist, EPCOR

Source Water Protection Planning is a strategy for water utilities designed to minimize the impacts human activities and natural events have on drinking water sources. To do this effectively it is critical to take a watershed management approach and to understand and characterize the watershed; water quality, quantity, and aquatic health in receiving waterbodies are integrally tied to what is occurring on the land.

The components of a conceptual Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP) as defined by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) include watershed delineation, inventory, and land use contaminants, risk assessment, and the development of a watershed management plan, supported by strong partnerships, public engagement, sufficient monitoring, and the use of established guidelines. Similar to the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME), the American Water Works Association (AWWA) has published a “standard” for Source Water Protection Planning.

In this workshop we will outline how to complete effective Source Water Protection Planning in Alberta. It will include a comprehensive session on land use mapping, water quality monitoring and assessment, risk assessment, and navigating water, land, and watershed management frameworks in Alberta from a municipal perspective.

Components of Source Water Protection (adapted from CCME 2004)

Although, source water protection programs may vary widely in their details, successful programs share six fundamental elements (AWWA 2010):

1. Source Water Protection Plan Vision
2. Characterization of Source Water & Source Water Protection Area
3. Source Water Protection Goals
4. Source Water Protection Action Plan
5. Program Implementation
6. Periodic Evaluation & Revision

Within this generalized framework, individual utilities may establish and maintain source water protection programs that account for their unique local conditions, incorporate the interests of local stakeholders, and reflect sustainable long-term commitments to the process by all parties.

In Alberta, effective source water protection planning relies on integration with existing watershed planning, initiatives including Watershed Planning and Advisory Councils (WPACs), local water management frameworks, and regional plans under the Land use Framework as well as Drinking Water Safety Plans. Similarly, monitoring, mapping, modeling, and overall watershed characterization as well as implementation programs are achieved through collaboration and partnership at multiple levels of both government and other stakeholders.