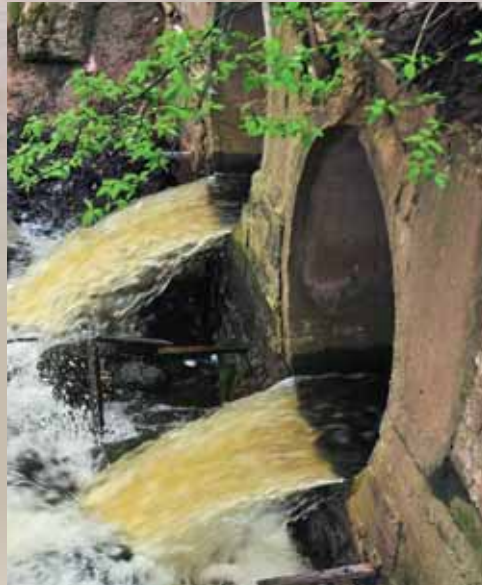


MARKHAM'S WATER

Protecting
Markham's
Drinking
Water
Supply



NEVER POLLUTE OUR DRINKING WATER!

ISSUE #2

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES



Markham's Only Source of Drinking Water is Lake Ontario

Lake Ontario is part of Canada's Great Lakes watershed, which is the largest fresh water system on Earth. Approximately 9 million people in Ontario and New York State rely on Lake Ontario for their drinking water. After years of abuse, Lake Ontario is under stress.



"The first barrier to the contamination of drinking water involves protecting the sources of drinking water."

Justice Dennis O'Connor
Walkerton Inquiry 2002

Fresh water is essential to all aspects of our lives and it is important that we all take part in protecting our fresh water source. To ensure clean, reliable water for tomorrow, we need to start protecting it today.

Our sewer grates, sinks, and toilets are not trash cans.

When you put cooking oil, baby wipes and chemical waste down your household drains you can block and corrode your home's plumbing system resulting in costly repairs for both the homeowner and the City.



Protecting the Water We Drink

9 Million people rely on Lake Ontario for drinking water and the everyday actions of each person directly impacts the health of our lake. It is important to understand the effects of our choices and behaviours because each person's individual actions accumulate—including yours!

Taking care of Lake Ontario is everyone's responsibility, so; take the extra effort to make good choices that will protect the quality of our drinking water, our infrastructure, and the beauty of our lakeshore.

Water Leaving the Home

The water used inside your home becomes wastewater that flows to a treatment facility in Pickering where it is cleaned and released back into Lake Ontario. **Our sewer systems are only designed to handle toilet paper and human waste – nothing else!**

Be aware of what *NOT* to put down the drain or toilet so we can keep our lake as clean as possible.



Use Your Local Car Wash – Not Your Driveway!

Commercial car washes are required to install backflow prevention devices and are connected to the sanitary sewer system so that all rinse water gets cleaned prior to release into the lake. These car washes use up to 50% less water than washing your vehicle in your driveway.

When washing your car in the driveway, the used water – containing chemicals, soaps and detergents – flows directly to Lake Ontario without being treated.

Don't Strain the Drain!

Many common household items that should NEVER go down a sink or toilet...

Fats, oils, and grease (FOG)

Photo courtesy Clean Water Services, Oregon



These substances stick to the inner surface of the sewer pipes, harden over time and can cause a sewage backup into your home or on your street.

✔ Absorb small amounts of FOG with paper towel

and place it in your green bin. For larger quantities over 1.0L, pour it into a container and take it to Markham's Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Depot or the Elgin Mills Community Environmental Centre.

✘ Running hot water does not dissolve grease.

Prescription Drugs, Over-the-Counter Medications and Supplements

Sewage treatment facilities are not designed to treat all traces of pharmaceuticals.

✔ All unused pharmaceuticals should be taken back to a pharmacy or Markham's HHW Depot for safe disposal.

✘ When you dispose of medications in a sink or toilet they may impact our water source and harm the environment and aquatic life.



Pre-moistened Wipes (i.e. Baby Wipes)

Pre-moistened wipes such as baby wipes and cleansing cloths are often marketed and labelled as being "flushable", but they are **NOT FLUSHABLE** and NOT SAFE for our sewer system.

✔ All pre-moistened wipes should be thrown into the garbage. The best environmental choice is to use toilet paper or tissue.

✘ Pre-moistened wipes are engineered fabrics made from synthetic polymers and are very thick and durable. When flushed, these products do not break down like toilet paper and cause sewer blockages.



Don't Flush This Stuff!

GREEN BIN

GARBAGE



Take Pride in Markham's Drinking Water

– it meets and exceeds all Ontario related Health Standards and it's yours to enjoy!

The water coming from your tap undergoes extensive treatment, filtration and continuous testing to ensure it meets all standards under the Ontario Safe Drinking Water Act, 2002.

- More than one-quarter of bottled water consumed by Canadians is actually bottled tap water!
- You pay extra for marketing, packaging, shipping and profit.
- Designer bottled water that undergoes extra filtration (i.e. reverse osmosis) may be more expensive due to the removal of minerals that your body needs, like calcium.



"Markham's water is clean, healthy and safe to drink. No need to boil or filter."

« L'eau de Markham est propre, saine et potable. Il n'est pas nécessaire de la faire bouillir ni de la filtrer. »

"萬錦市的水質清潔、健康，可以安全地直接飲用。無需煮沸或過濾。"

« آب مارکھام تمیز، سالم و برای نوشیدن امن است و نیازی به جوشاندن یا فیلتر کردن آن نیست. »

« L'acqua di Markham è pulita, sana e sicura da bere. Non serve bollirla né filtrarla. »

"ਮਰਖਮ ਦਾ ਪਾਣੀ ਸਾਫ਼, ਸਿਹਤਮੰਦ ਅਤੇ ਪੀਣ ਲਈ ਸੁਰੱਖਿਅਤ ਹੈ। ਉਬਾਲਣ ਜਾਂ ਫਿਲਟਰ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕੋਈ ਲੋੜ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ।"

"மார்க்கம் தண்ணீர் தூய்மையானது, ஆரோக்கியமானது, குடிப்பதற்குப் பாதுகாப்பானது. கொதிக்க வைக்கவோ, வடிகட்டவோ வேண்டியதில்லை."

"مارکھم کا پانی صاف ستھرا، صحت بخش اور پینے کیلئے محفوظ ہے۔ اسے ابالنے یا فلٹر کرنے کی ضرورت نہیں ہے۔"

Markham's Tap Water Is...



- ✓ Highly regulated by the Ministries of Health and Environment
- ✓ Continuously tested
- ✓ 1,000 times less expensive than bottled tap water

Impacts of Outdoor Water Use

The water in our neighbourhood creeks, streams and rivers eventually flow to Lake Ontario. It is important to understand that it isn't just how you use your water indoors that impacts the water quality of our lake, but your outdoor water use as well.

What You Can Do

Tips for Sustainable Pools, Spas, and Hot Tubs

✓ Never drain chlorinated water directly to the storm sewer.

✓ Do not add chemicals for 2 weeks prior to draining your pool, spa, or hot tub.

✓ A good option is to drain onto your lawn.

Lawn Care

✓ Eliminate the use of all pesticides, chemical treatments and reduce the use of fertilizers. When landscapes are watered or it rains, these chemicals may enter our storm sewers polluting our fresh drinking water.

Sustainable Landscapes

✓ When possible, create a rain-friendly landscape by sprucing up your yard with plants and gardens to reduce run-off into the storm sewers.

Markham's Businesses are Regulated

All businesses in Markham are required to adhere to Markham's strict Backflow Prevention

Bylaw. This bylaw ensures that businesses are doing their part to minimize the risk of contaminating our drinking water supply by installing backflow prevention devices.



Need more information?

markham.ca | 905-477-5530 | customerservice@markham.ca



Follow us @cityofmarkham with #MarkhamH2O

