

Cambridge Groundwater Guardian

Introduction

Cambridge Groundwater Guardian is currently the only Groundwater Guardian community in Canada (besides the affiliate member, the Regional Municipality of Waterloo). Since 1997, Cambridge's Groundwater Guardian has undertaken groundwater protection and conservation related activities including the development of educational posters and teaching packages, and participated in public awareness events and wellhead protection implementation plans.



**Cambridge Groundwater Guardian Founder,
Paul Puodziunas, 1952-2006**

September 2007 will mark ten years since the designation of Cambridge (Ontario, Canada) as a Groundwater Guardian Community by the Groundwater Foundation. Paul Puodziunas, a resident of nearby Brantford, and April Souwand, the City's Senior Environmental Planner, were instrumental in the formation of the first Groundwater Guardian committee. The City had been obtaining its water supply from groundwater for more than 100 years and the municipal water supply infrastructure and administration were long established. As a charter member of Groundwater Guardian and its first Chair, Paul recognized the need for improved public awareness about groundwater resources, and worked tirelessly over the next decade on the committee's initiatives to promote education about groundwater in Cambridge. In his own pleasant style, Paul was a willing and vigorous participant in all Groundwater Guardian activities.

Paul graduated with a B. Sc. in Earth Sciences (University of Waterloo) in 1975. Over the next 30 years Paul had an exciting and varied career in the geosciences. He worked in oil and gas exploration including the off-shore, water-resource development in Tanzania, nuclear geological-repository siting in Europe, and in the groundwater consulting industry across Canada. Sadly, on August 29, 2006, Paul lost a struggle with leukemia at the age of 54. He is survived by his parents, Enna and Victor, and his brother Leonard. He leaves many friends, who are saddened by his loss but remember the commitment, vibrancy and smile so prevalent during his active life.

Milestones

Next September, Cambridge Groundwater Guardian will be celebrating its 10th anniversary. This article recognizes the 10-year journey and the people, including Paul, who have contributed so much to groundwater education in our community.

Cambridge Groundwater Facts

The City of Cambridge is situated in the heart of Southern Ontario, Canada, approximately a one hour drive west of Toronto, and a three hour drive northeast of Detroit. The City is a local area

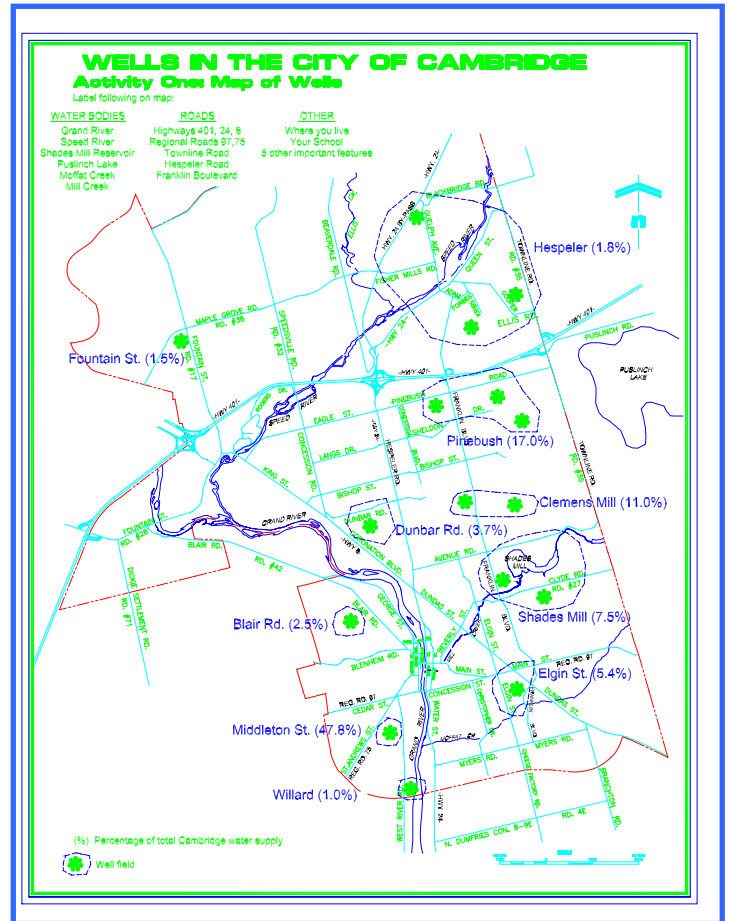
municipality within the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, the largest urban area dependent upon groundwater in Canada. Cambridge is situated at the confluence of the Grand and Speed rivers which are important



sources of drinking water for a number of communities. Underlying bedrock aquifers supply most of the drinking water to Cambridge (population 130,000) as well as to the other municipalities within the Regional Municipality of Waterloo (which has a total population of approximately 500,000). The City relies on twenty-seven water supply wells up to 60 metres (200 feet) deep. The highest producing wells occur in the heart of the City and these supply almost half of the water used by residents and industries. Many of these wells date back to the 1900's with the first wells being drilled in 1891. Approximately 80% of the water consumption in the City is drawn from groundwater. The remaining 20% comes from the Grand River and is pumped into the Manheim aquifer and mixed with groundwater before distribution. Although this precious resource is relied upon as our source of drinking water, other water uses place a great strain on its availability. However, attitudes towards water usage and conservation have begun to change with the recent water restriction by-laws, educational activities and events, and very successful incentive programs (rainbarrels, high-efficiency toilet replacement programs, among others).

Cambridge Groundwater Guardian

Cambridge Groundwater Guardian is an active working subcommittee of the Cambridge Environmental Advisory Committee which is appointed by City Council.



It consists of approximately ten dedicated volunteers with various interests and areas of expertise. Cambridge faces many threats just like other communities both in Canada and the US, in terms of water quality and quantity issues, but the group has remained focused on education initiatives over advocacy. As a subcommittee under the City's administration, its accomplishments are reported to Council and therefore draw considerable City support. The need for a Groundwater Guardian was identified as a community objective in the City strategic plan ("Our Common Future"), prepared in the early 1990s.

Region of Waterloo GG Affiliate (Since 1998)

- ❖ **Support:**
 - Cambridge GGC
 - Groundwater Festival
 - Grade 8 Field School
- ❖ **Programs:**
 - Deicing Salt Reduction
 - Industrial Threats
 - Rural Water Quality
 - Monitoring
- ❖ **Education Initiatives:**
 - Presentations
 - Events
 - Literature

"Congratulations to the Cambridge Groundwater Guardians on their 10th anniversary! This group of citizens committed to groundwater initiatives has truly benefited our community."

– Eric Hodgins, Manager Water Resources Protection, Regional Municipality of Waterloo

The Big Groundwater Picture

Walkerton is a small town of about 6,000 people that is only a 1.5 hour drive north-west of Cambridge. And like Cambridge it too is dependent on groundwater as its source of drinking water. In May 2000,

Teacher's Guide

WHERE DOES MY DRINKING WATER COME FROM?



AND WHERE DOES IT GO?

PREPARED BY THE CAMBRIDGE GROUNDWATER GUARDIAN COMMITTEE



Design by Greg Rauffer Graphic Design
Illustrated by ColourFix
Based on initial sketches by G.C.I. Students Nigel Downer and Dan Tompa.
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In 1997, Cambridge Groundwater Guardian produced a teaching package for Grades 3 and 4 entitled "Where Does My Drinking Water Come From and Where Does it Go?" The package included a teacher's guide, a poster, and an interactive package for students.

several serious flaws in Walkerton’s municipal drinking water system resulted in seven deaths and more than 2,300 cases of waterborne disease affecting almost half the residents of the town. As a result of that tragedy a public inquiry identified the need for government actions and planning that focused on “source water protection” at the watershed / regional level in the Province of Ontario. Cambridge Groundwater Guardian has created displays and information materials, in partnership with the Regional Municipality of Waterloo, and looks forward to greater involvement in other source water protection efforts.

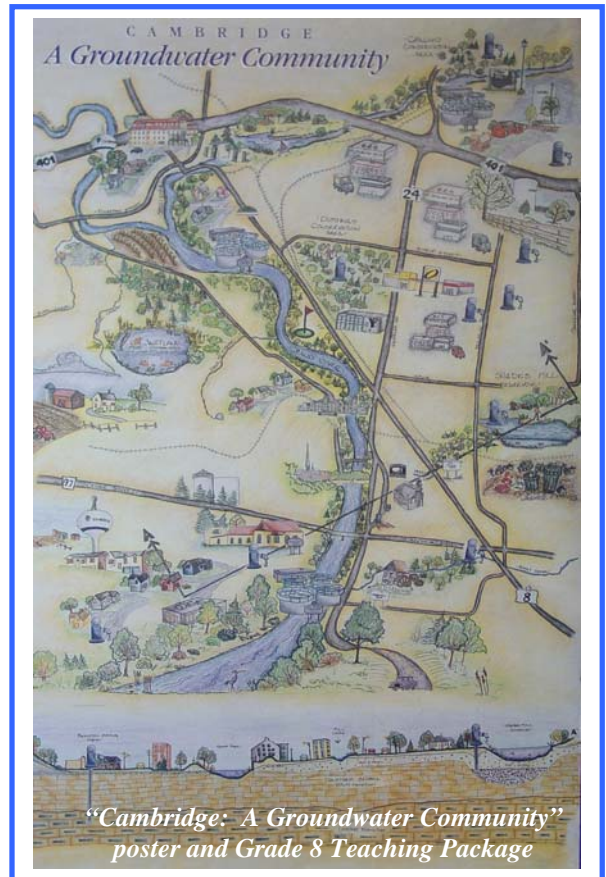
The Future of Cambridge Groundwater Guardian?

As Dave Smyth, long-time Groundwater Guardian member, remarked in noting the longevity of the group, “our mandate has not run dry.” Whereas single-issue advocacy groups, or task

“Our mandate has not run dry.”

– Dave Smyth, Cambridge Groundwater Guardian member

forces, disband at the end of their mandate, Cambridge Groundwater Guardian has stayed the course, and continues to develop new ways to tell the groundwater story. With expected and continued growth within the City, and the new requirements under Provincial source water protection legislation, Cambridge Groundwater Guardian will likely be busier than ever in the coming years!



For more information...

Contact Paul Willms, at 519.740.4560, extension 4559 or by email at willmsp@city.cambridge.on.ca.

Visit the water protection pages at the Region of Waterloo’s website, www.region.waterloo.on.ca, for info on videos, posters, reports, teacher resources, factsheets, programs, and the Waterloo Wellington Children’s Groundwater Festival.