

# What are the next steps?

## JUMP IN, GET INVOLVED at Public Workshops!

There are a few more key steps that need to be completed – and then we will have our new City of Toronto stormwater management plan! The first is to finalize our targets and then to develop a number of alternative wet weather management strategies for comparison and evaluation. This involves looking at combinations of stormwater management options that would be effective in each of five WWFMMP study areas. **WE NEED YOUR INPUT ON THESE TARGETS, STRATEGIES AND HOW THEY WILL BE EVALUATED!**

A series of public workshops is being planned for the spring. You will receive information about when and where these workshops will be held. Come out and let us know what you think.

## Work in Progress – Taking Action

While the development of the WWFMMP is going on, many local environmental groups and volunteers are doing good work to implement projects that improve stormwater management. For more information about these continuing efforts and how you can get involved, please check out:

- Friends of the Don East [www.web.net/~fode/](http://www.web.net/~fode/)
- Waterfront Regeneration Trust [www.waterfronttrust.com](http://www.waterfronttrust.com)
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority [www.trca.on.ca](http://www.trca.on.ca)
- Task Force to Bring Back the Don [www.city.toronto.on.ca/don](http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/don)
- Don Watershed Regeneration Council [www.trca.on.ca/3a.html](http://www.trca.on.ca/3a.html)
- Etobicoke-Mimico Creek Task Force [www.trca.on.ca/3.html](http://www.trca.on.ca/3.html)
- Humber Watershed Alliance [www.trca.on.ca/3b.html](http://www.trca.on.ca/3b.html)
- Rouge Park Alliance [web.idirect.com/~heritage/whoswho.html](http://web.idirect.com/~heritage/whoswho.html)
- Friends of Highland Creek [www.soknacki.com/highland.html](http://www.soknacki.com/highland.html)
- Toronto Bay Initiative [www.torontobay.net](http://www.torontobay.net)
- Citizen's Environment Watch [www.utoronto.ca/envstudy/cew/cew.htm](http://www.utoronto.ca/envstudy/cew/cew.htm)

Give us a call if you want to add your group's website to our list!

# Basement Flooding

Be careful! A flooded basement poses a risk of electrical shock and flood water may contain bacteria harmful to health. Follow these steps in the event of a flooded basement:

Call the appropriate Works and Emergency Services staff immediately, 24 hours a day, seven days a week:

East York 416-396-2800

Etobicoke 416-394-8615

Scarborough (day) 416-396-7372

(after hours) 416-396-4808

Toronto 416-392-7737

York 416-394-2630

North York (day) 416-395-6205

(after hours) 416-395-6333

- Call your insurance company as soon as possible and report property damage caused by the flooding.
- Be mindful of health and safety when cleaning up your flooded basement.

## Would you like to know more?

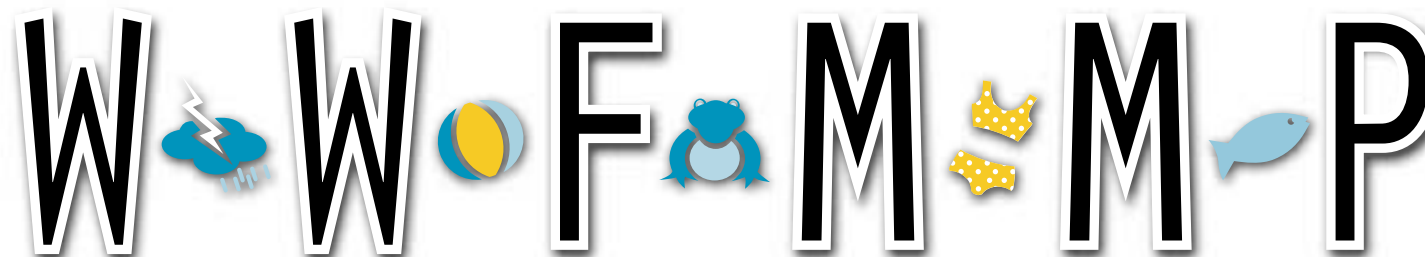
Additional information on indicators, targets, and the preliminary modelling results is available. You can ask for:

- A copy of our Progress Report which has more information about the modelling results for all of the watershed areas.
- A copy of the tables showing the numeric targets for all of the City's watersheds is available on CD.



## How to contact us for information!

Tracey Ehl, Senior Public Consultation Coordinator  
 Metro Hall, Stn. 1180, 18th floor  
 55 John Street  
 Toronto, ON M5V 3C6  
 Tel: 416-392-2996  
 Fax: 416-392-2974  
 TTY: 416-397-0831  
 e-mail: [tehl@city.toronto.on.ca](mailto:tehl@city.toronto.on.ca)  
 Website: [www.city.toronto.on.ca/wetweatherflow](http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/wetweatherflow)



WET WEATHER FLOW MANAGEMENT MASTER PLAN

# Managing wet weather in the city - key pieces coming together



This is the second official newsletter for the City of Toronto's Wet Weather Flow Management Master Plan – otherwise known by its acronym WWFMMP or simply the "Plan". It is a plan to manage the water that flows through the City when it rains and when snow melts.

Effectively managing stormwater is a priority for the City of Toronto. There are two important things we are striving to achieve:

1. decreasing the QUANTITY of stormwater that enters the sewer system; and
2. improving the QUALITY of stormwater that eventually ends up in the creeks, rivers and the lake.

Doing this will help clean up our beaches, reduce erosion from stream banks, improve water quality, improve fish habitat, and result in a long list of other positive impacts on the City.

## What has happened so far?

Making decisions about how to better manage stormwater in the City of Toronto means bringing together information on a wide range of different topics from a wide range of sources. To date, a number of important pieces of the WWFMMP have been completed – collaboratively – by City staff, consultants, the WWFMMP Steering Committee, key stakeholder groups, government agencies and the public.

These include the developing and documenting of:

- Existing conditions in Toronto's watersheds;
- Information on all possible stormwater management measures;
- Guiding Principles and objectives to guide the development of the Plan; and
- Criteria to evaluate different stormwater management strategies.

- Complete the City-wide Plan
- Identify the preferred strategy
- Evaluate the strategies using the evaluation criteria
- Develop alternative stormwater management strategies (combining a number of different options to address problem)
- Develop evaluation criteria to help select best options
- Identify possible stormwater management options
- Understand existing conditions within Toronto watersheds

## What is the Process?

## Thanks for coming out. We heard you.

Feedback and advice from the public are being incorporated at every step along the way. Stakeholders have influenced our principles, objectives, how we will evaluate strategies and given us insights about what people are willing to do to help solve the problem.

### Stakeholders have participated in:

- the project Steering Committee and Sub-Committees;
- 5 workshops held around the City in fall 2000;
- A City-wide workshop held in the spring of 2001;
- 4 focus groups held with residential property owners;
- 4 focus groups held with industrial, commercial, and institutional property owners and developers; and
- online feedback through the WWFMP website.

## What are you willing to do? Highlights of feedback, advice and quotes heard from...

### Toronto residents:

- practical and low-cost stormwater management options would be preferred – particularly downspout disconnection, rainbarrel use, and control of pesticides;
- the plan should result in cost-effective solutions to improve water quality, with minimal disruption to the community;
- cost-effective solutions to improve water quality;
- ensuring community health and safety would be a priority; and
- environmental concerns were the main motivation for residents to consider implementing stormwater management on their properties

### Representatives of the Industrial, Commercial, Institutional, and Development sectors:

- this is an important project for the City to be undertaking;
- cost and cost-effectiveness are the most important factors for these sectors to consider when making decisions to implement on-site stormwater management;
- it is easiest to implement changes during new or re-developments; and
- continue to involve the business community in Plan development.

### Spring workshop participants:

- "We should not discount measures because of lengthy implementation – but we also need some measures with fast results."
- "We can't toss out a strategy just because the uninformed public don't like it, but if everyone objects, then implementation is unlikely."
- "If the plan is too expensive, it won't get implemented."
- "The cost of doing nothing is also highly important."
- "Aesthetics are important, as are public consultation and involvement."

# Plan Objectives

The City of Toronto's Wet Weather Flow Management Master Plan will be guided by the following principles and objectives:

- Rainwater is a resource. As a priority, rainwater (including snowmelt) should be managed where it falls on the lots and streets of our City, particularly before it enters a sewer.
- Wet weather flow will be managed on a watershed basis with a natural systems approach being applied to stormwater management as a priority.
- A hierarchy of wet weather flow solutions will be implemented – starting with "at source", then "conveyance", and finally "end-of-pipe".
- Toronto's communities need to be made aware of wet weather flow issues and involved in the solutions.

## Water Quality Objectives

- **Meet guidelines for water and sediment quality:** Contribute to achieving federal, provincial and municipal water and sediment quality objectives and guidelines in area watercourses and along the waterfront.
- **Virtually eliminate toxics through pollution prevention:** Contribute to the virtual elimination of toxic contaminants in groundwater and surface water utilizing the principle of pollution prevention at source.
- **Improve water quality in rivers and the lake for body contact recreation:** Improve water quality for body contact recreation in rivers and recreational areas and reduce posting of beaches by the Medical Officer of Health.
- **Improve aesthetics:** Contribute to eliminating objectionable deposits, nuisance algae growth, unnatural colour, turbidity and odour in order to improve the aesthetics of area surface waters.

## Water Quantity Objectives

- **Preserve and re-establish a natural hydrologic cycle:** Contribute to the re-establishment of a more natural hydrologic process to protect and restore groundwater and surface water resources, based on maximizing permeability and minimizing runoff at source.
- **Reduce erosion impacts on habitats and property:** Manage wet weather flows to reduce erosion impacts on stream and riparian habitats on public and private properties and open spaces.
- **Eliminate or minimize threats to life and property from flooding:** Eliminate or minimize threat to life and property from flooding.

## Natural Areas and Wildlife Objectives

- **Protect, enhance and restore natural features (e.g., wetlands) and functions:** Contribute to the protection, enhancement and restoration of natural features and functions such as wetlands and riparian and other ecological corridors.
- **Achieve healthy aquatic communities:** Contribute to achieving healthy aquatic communities, including warmwater or coldwater fisheries as appropriate.
- **Reduce fish contamination:** Contribute to reducing fish consumption advisories due to local wet weather sources.

## Sewer System Objectives

- **Eliminate discharges of sanitary sewage:** Eliminate discharges of sanitary sewage including those associated with CSOs, SSOs, treatment plant bypasses, illegal cross-connections and spills.
- **Reduce infiltration and inflow to sanitary sewers:** Reduce sanitary sewer infiltration and inflows to City design standards.
- **Reduce basement flooding:** Manage wet weather flow to reduce basement flooding.

# Evaluation Approach

How do we decide which stormwater management options will work best in Toronto? There are a number of things that will be considered when we compare and evaluate different strategies. To choose the preferred one, we will ask:

- How effective is the strategy at achieving Plan objectives within the different watersheds and across the City?
- How well does the strategy reflect the priority of managing stormwater where it falls (i.e. at the source)?
- How long will it take to implement the strategy?
- How easy will it be to monitor results?
- What is the potential risk/liability or benefit to community health and safety?
- How acceptable is the strategy to the public?
- How does the strategy impact private properties, valleys and open spaces such as vacant areas, parks, and hydro corridors?
- What is the potential impact on terrestrial systems, air emissions and aquatic systems?
- What is the total annual cost of the strategy? And who will pay for it?

# What's happening now?

Through the summer, fall and winter months of 2001, two main activities took place to answer some challenging questions:

**1** How can we measure our progress? A list of indicators and targets that can be used to measure progress toward the Plan Objectives have been

developed (for example, one indicator of water quality is the number of E. coli bacteria in the water – water with less than 100 E. coli in 100 millilitres of water is safe for swimming); and

**2** What can we achieve? Different stormwater management approaches have been modelled using computers to help us understand what can be achieved by managing stormwater where it falls (at the source), as it travels through the City (during conveyance), and right before it enters the lake (at the end of the pipe).

## What did we learn?

- As a result of the modelling we know that a combination of stormwater management options will be required in order to achieve the WWFMP objectives;

• Even when the weather is dry, there are significant problems in the City's rivers and the Lake.

• Managing stormwater at the source is effective at moving us toward achievement of the WWFMP Objectives – particularly in some of Toronto's streams and rivers;

• In some areas of the City, managing stormwater at the source is not effective at moving us toward achievement of the WWFMP Objectives – particularly along Toronto's waterfront;

• Managing stormwater through conveyance measures (i.e. as it flows through the City) is only possible in certain areas of Toronto where the soils allow water to easily infiltrate into the ground and where the water table is low;

• Most of Toronto's watersheds originate in the 905 area necessitating that we work closely with 905 municipalities to identify ways to work cooperatively to address stormwater management issues.