

# The **HUMBER** Resource

Produced by Works & Emergency Services for residents and industry served by the Humber Wastewater Treatment Plant

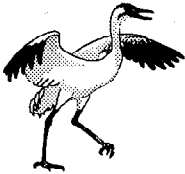
## ***Humber Resource has a new look!***



We've redesigned the look of The Humber Resource, giving the newsletter more of a naturalized look. After all, the Humber Wastewater Treatment Plant is located right next to one of only six coastal marshes on the Lake Ontario shoreline - the Humber Marshes. We want to acknowledge the many species of birds, mammals, amphibians and reptiles found in the marshes. You may have seen Common Tern, Black-Crowned Night Heron, mink, Painted Turtle or Leopard Frog.



The marshes and Humber River function as a major corridor for such migratory birds as Sharp-Shinned Hawk and Wood Ducks.

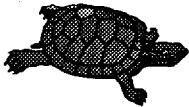


Fish such as pike, rainbow trout, brown trout, largemouth bass, and perch, also make this area their home. Let's celebrate our wonderful, natural, wildlife neighbours!



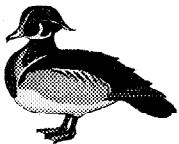
## **Go with the (over) flow!**

Over the summers of 1997 and 1998, Works and Emergency Services received a number of complaints about foul odours from residents in the Berry Road and Stephen Drive area. Located underground, near this intersection, is an overflow chamber, part of the Humber Sanitary Trunk Sewer. This sewer carries raw sewage to the Humber Wastewater Treatment Plant. Occasionally, sewer gas escapes from this chamber - you may have smelled it yourself from time to time. In December of 1998, Works staff were on-site to deal with the problem.



## ***Here's what was recently done to help fix the situation:***

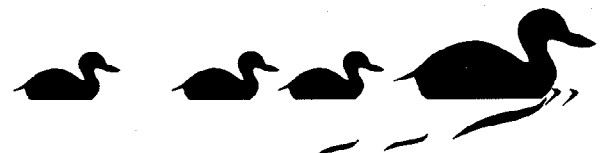
Two storm sewers which enter the outlet portion of the overflow chamber on Stephen Drive have been joined together and now discharge independently of the sanitary sewer through a single pipe, encased in concrete, into the ditch which flows into the Humber River. The sanitary sewer overflow outlet is also now equipped with a flap gate. This gate allows the storm sewer to drain freely while sealing off any odour from the overflow chamber. If the sanitary sewer does overflow, an electronic device in the chamber will detect it and send a signal to the Plant, alerting staff to check the gate to make sure it is properly reset and seals the outlet.



We trust this modification will address the odour problem. If these measures are not fully satisfactory, Water Pollution Control has reserved funding to further modify the system.



**Works and Emergency Services**



## Pumping station odour control pilot project

We realize sewer odours are not restricted to Berry Road and Stephen Drive. Occasionally odours are also noticed around the city's wastewater pumping stations. That's why Works and Emergency Services staff are conducting odour control pilot projects at the "New Toronto" and "Mimico Superior" pumping stations, located at south of Lakeshore Boulevard at 2<sup>nd</sup> Street and Superior Avenue respectively.

These pilot projects call for each station to gain the addition of a fan room and a filter. Each pumping station is also equipped with a gravity ventilation shaft. The shaft allows the sewer to "breathe" (air enters and leaves the sewer because of the changing water levels). The fan will draw the odours from the shaft and pump it through a filter before discharging it to the atmosphere.

Equipment installation is planned for summer 1999.

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### Check out the city's water-related web sites:

[www.city.toronto.on.ca/sewers](http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/sewers)  
information on wastewater process and systems

[www.city.toronto.on.ca/water](http://www.city.toronto.on.ca/water)  
facts on water supply, drinking water treatment processes, and water efficiency - every drop counts!

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### For information about the upcoming meeting or the HTPNLC, please contact:

Ann Marie Weselan  
Public Consultation Co-ordinator  
(416) 392-2962 (TTY: 397-0831)  
e-mail:

[Ann\\_Marie\\_Weselan@metrodesk.metrotor.on.ca](mailto:Ann_Marie_Weselan@metrodesk.metrotor.on.ca)



## A health report

by Dr. Brian Gibson, Environmental Health Consultant  
with Lakeshore Area Multi-Service Project (LAMP)  
Occupational Health Program



### Can sewer gas affect your health?

Hydrogen sulphide causes the rotten egg smell of sewer gas. We can smell hydrogen sulphide at a concentration in air as low as 30 parts per billion. It begins to produce symptoms and has a strong odour at a concentration of one part per million.

The symptoms that can be caused by hydrogen sulphide include nausea, headache, insomnia, eye irritation and breathing difficulties for some people. At concentrations in air greater than 30 parts per million, the symptoms become worse.

### How high has the exposure to hydrogen sulphide been?

Concentrations of hydrogen sulphide in the sewer gas, measured inside the actual maintenance holes south of Berry Road, reached as high as 20 parts per million on some occasions during the summer of 1998. Naturally, this gas would be diluted outside the sewer itself, causing the concentrations around the apartment building to be lower.

### Do I need to do anything?

If you are in good health and have experienced no more than the usual symptoms related to hydrogen sulphide when the odours were at their worst, you shouldn't worry about your own or your children's health. If you have other health problems and fear they may have been made worse by this exposure, you should see your family physician. There may be reasons other than hydrogen sulphide exposure why your health problem has worsened. The LAMP Occupational Health Program (LOHP), located at 185 Fifth Street, Etobicoke, provides a service for physicians and their patients to assess whether or not specific symptoms are likely to be the result of chemical exposures. This service only provides the exposure assessment; it does not provide on-going treatment of patients. You can reach LOHP by calling the program assistant, Lee Ciupa, at 416-252-6471, ext. 229.

### You are invited...

Come be a member of the Humber Treatment Plant Neighbourhood Liaison Committee (HTPNLC). The committee:

- acts as an advisory group for activities and projects at the Humber Plant
- meets every few months or as required
- provides an excellent opportunity for area residents and businesses to get involved with plant issues

### Join us at our next meeting:

Date: **Thursday, May 27, 1999**  
Time: 7:00 p.m.  
Location: Humber Wastewater Treatment Plant  
130 The Queensway, Etobicoke

