



FARLAIN LAKE
Community Association

RIPPLES

SPECIAL EDITION

Spring 2011

In this issue:

- **2011 Farlain Lake Water Quality Survey**
- **Septage Disposal Concerns**
- **Upcoming Events**

Board of Directors

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President's Musings

Bob Allan

Like many others in the community, I call Farlain Lake my home. Other community members call Farlain Lake their 'home away from home'.

Regardless of how much time we spend at the lake, we share the same concerns about the Farlain Lake community. We are concerned about containing urban sprawl and land use matters in general. We want to protect our property values and the shared social and natural values of the lake community. Foremost in our minds is the protection of groundwater and surface water in our lake community.

The need to protect our lake, our groundwater, our woodlands, and our community will continue to be foremost in the minds of the volunteers who serve in the Farlain Lake Community Association. Throughout this coming spring and summer months, a core group of FLCA volunteers will be involved with a number of water protection initiatives. One project involves the study of the lake's water quality by the Severn Sound Environmental Association and the Township of Tiny.

Another project involves monitoring the disposal of untreated septage in a Ministry of Environment approved septage field in our lake's watershed.

In addition to our work on environmental projects, this summer will see the return of the popular boat parade. The event will promote the value of the lake in a wonderful and entertaining way. There will be a competition for the best decorated boats. A social event will be held following the parade for participants who transformed their boats in imaginative themed displays. Further information on this special social event will be provided in the near future. See you soon at the Lake!

Water Quality Survey of Farlain Lake

Bill Sweeney

'To halt the decline of an ecosystem, it is necessary to think like an ecosystem.'

Under the auspices of the Township of Tiny, the Severn Sound Environmental Association will be conducting a water quality survey of Farlain Lake between the months of May and October of this year. There is a need to update the current water quality status of Farlain Lake and compare the current status with historical water quality data. The survey will map the lake's watershed and drainage, define groundwater flow paths, and identify water quality issues, and emerging or potential concerns.

Water samples will be collected twice a month and analyzed by a laboratory. Water clarity will also be measured. Information emanating from the water quality study will be shared with partner organizations (i.e. Ministry of Natural Resources, Ministry of the Environment, Severn Sound Environmental Association, and the Farlain Lake Community Association) to assist in the responsible management of Farlain Lake.

The final technical report will be presented to Tiny Township Council in June 2012.

High quality water is essential to health, recreation, and economic growth.



There are insufficient sewage treatment facilities or modernized treatment facilities to accommodate the disposal of septage across the Province.

Septage

Pete Andrews

The Big Picture

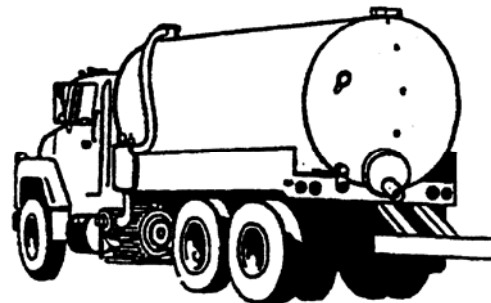
Septage Scenario in Ontario

Septage is either disposed of at sewage treatment plants, landfill sites, dewatering trenches, waste stabilization lagoons, or land applied. Unlike other provinces, Ontario allows untreated household septage from Class 4 (septic tank) and Class 5 (holding tank) sewage systems to be applied to land. Most provinces require septage to be treated to a level that meets provincial standards prior to land application or disposal at sewage treatment facilities. The Ontario Government is committed to ending the land application of untreated septage, but cannot do so because of the lack of capacity to treat septage, either at sewage treatment plants or with viable alternative treatment solutions.

There are approximately 1.2 million septic systems in the Province. Nearly 30% of Ontario's homes are serviced by onsite wastewater systems. Of the estimated 473 sewage treatment plants in Ontario less than one third (approximately 30%) accept septage. In other words, there are insufficient sewage treatment facilities or modernized treatment facilities to accommodate the disposal of septage across the Province.

Tiny's Septage Situation

Tiny Township is one of the municipalities in Ontario that does not have a central treatment facility that can accommodate septage. Of the approximately 12,812 developed and undeveloped properties in Tiny Township, no property is serviced by a municipal sewage treatment system. The Township is currently undertaking an environmental assessment as part of a septic management strategy.



A typical haulage truck used to pump septage (raw sewage) from septic tanks and holding tanks and dispose the contents directly to the surface of land or at waste treatment facilities.

Septage (cont'd)

Septage in our Community

The Septage Field

The Ministry of the Environment (MOE) approved an acceptance site (septage field) on July 9, 2010. The site, identified as the Awenda Site, consists of 21 hectares (52 acres) in total. The site is situated east of Awenda Park Road and south of Concession 17 E. Only 6.4 hectares (15.8 acres) of the total site has been approved for the land application of hauled septage. The septage field is located approximately 390 metres from Farlain Lake. Regional Sanitation Disposal Ltd. owns and operates the septage field.

There are two primary septage haulers in Tiny Township. Regional Sanitation Disposal Ltd. is one of them. In addition to providing services within Tiny Township, Regional Sanitation Disposal Ltd. also hauls septage from other Townships. Only septage hauled by Regional Sanitation Disposal Ltd. can be land applied to the Awenda septage site.

The photo below shows the location of the Awenda field at the south end of our lake.



Septage

Septage in our Community (continued)

Checks and Balances

The Ministry of the Environment imposes standards and conditions on the transport and land application of septage through the Certificate of Approval process. To be approved as septage field, Regional Sanitation Disposal had to apply for a Certificate of Approval from MOE. The MOE District Office assessed the information (i.e. soil type, slope of land, setback distances, etc.) contained in the application and conducted a pre-approval site visit to confirm all submitted documentation was correct. In addition to evaluating the site, MOE required the septage hauler to undertake a hydrogeological study of site before the Provisional Certificate of Approval was issued. The MOE District Office also notified the local municipal clerk where the land application site was located.

A number of septage application restrictions were set out in the Certificate of Approval. Some of these operating conditions for the Awenda septage field include:

- Application rate of 10 litres per square metre per 7 day period.
- Septage can not be applied to the site when heavy rainfall is threatening or occurring, or when the soil is saturated at the surface.
- Septage can not be spread after November 30th or prior to April 1st of any year. Septage can not be spread on frozen, ice covered or snow covered soil.

Groundwater will be monitored twice a year for nitrate, nitrite, TKN (total Kjeldahl nitrogen), ammonia, and phosphorous.

"We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us. When we see land as a commodity to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect."

Aldo Leopold



Septgage

Septage in our Community (continued)

The FLCA Board of Directors has a number of concerns.

Our Concerns

- Public Health
As the raw septage is not pre-treated (i.e. alkaline stabilization) before being applied to the land, various infectious agents in the soil may survive. The possible transfer of pathogenic organisms by vectors (i.e. insects, rodents, etc.) to humans is another concern.
- Environmental
Groundwater and the underlying aquifers could be contaminated by septage percolating through the sandy loam soil. The surface water of the lake could possibly be contaminated from stormwater runoff. The long-term hazards of septage migration into the groundwater and the lake are also a concern.
- Nuisance Issues
Odour from the septage field, dust from septage application operations, mud spread from the field to the Concession 17 E road which is used as a hiking trail, and other factors will affect the lifestyle activities of community residents.
- Property Devaluation
The presence of a septage field operation in the lake community may affect property values.
- Compliance
MOE's limited resources negate its ability to proactively monitor the land application of septage by haulers. Ensuring that conditions set out by MOE are adhered to and that no illegal dumping occurs is dependant upon the cooperation and honesty of the hauler.
- Future Land Use
The proposed use of the site when the current Certificate of Approval is terminated is unknown. The continuation of the site as a septage field or a possible site for the disposal of biosolids needs to be addressed. A proposed plan for the closure and rehabilitation of the site needs to be developed.
- Communication
Current MOE policies do not foster openness and transparency. Results from groundwater monitoring, outcomes of site inspections, violation reports, and the results of the annual log book review may not be made available to the Farlain Lake Community Association.

The true measurement of the concerns will be the community's reaction to the land application of septage in our lake community.

"Anything else you're interested in is not going to happen if you can't breathe the air or drink the water. Don't sit this one out. Do something. You are by accident of fate alive at an absolutely critical moment in the history of our planet."

Carl Sagan

What Regulations govern the application of septage?

The standards and conditions set out in the Environmental Protection Act by the Ministry of the Environment are designed to protect public health and the environment from reasonably anticipated adverse effects of pollutants in domestic septage.

As part of the licensing process, the MOE district office monitors the activities of Regional Sanitation Disposal Ltd. to ensure that the septage is in accordance with EPA regulations. The septage disposal activities are also monitored to ensure no offsite effects such as vermin, odour, dust, litter, noise and traffic problems occur due to hauling and disposal activities.

How do we protect our ground and surface waters, the natural environment, and human health from septage disposal in our lake community?

The Farlain Lake Community Association will continue to seek information (i.e. on-site water monitoring records, haulage/disposal logbooks, etc.) from the Ministry of Environment to ensure that safeguards are in place, septage disposal activities are actively monitored, and community issues are addressed in a timely manner.

Concerned property owners can contact the MOE district office directly to make a complaint or report suspected improper septage application activities.

MOE Barrie District Office
12101-54 Cedar Pointe Drive
Barrie, ON L4N 5R7
Toll free telephone number: 1-800-890-8511

Please be specific with your concern or complaint. Record the location of your observation as well as the date and time, and what you observed. Photographs can also be very helpful during an investigation.

Farlain Lake Community

The Farlain Lake Community Association (FLCA) is a volunteer organization dedicated to enhancing, preserving, and protecting the quality of the lake and its watershed through the promotion of responsible, effective environmental and educational initiatives. We strive to strengthen and unite the Farlain Lake community through recreational, social, and civic activities. Our aim is to preserve this regionally unique resource as a natural environment legacy for future generations.

Mark Your Calendars!

2011 Boat Parade
▶ July 30th
(rain day is July 31st)

2011 Annual General Meeting
▶ August 7th
▶ Maple Valley Sport Club

What is the FLCA doing for you?

- ♥ *Environmental advocacy.*
e.g. monitoring fisheries, wildlife habitat, invasive species, etc.
- ♥ *Water quality testing.*
FLCA conducts water quality sampling with results available to community members.
- ♥ *Liaison with decision makers.*
Acting as voice for the community at the municipal and county levels.
- ♥ *Communications*
The FLCA website is currently being updated to help keep us connected as a community. Newsletters and electronic bulletins provide members with timely information.
- ♥ *Social events.*
e.g. picnic, boat parade, etc.
- ♥ *Information exchange.*
Obtaining information on issues affecting the community and the lake's watershed.
- ♥ *Annual General Meeting.*
A chance to discuss issues, meet neighbours and discuss issues with other property owners in the community.

FLCA works on your behalf to not only protect the value of your property but the quality of your life in the Farlain Lake community as well. Annual membership fees are a vote of confidence for the hard work of the many talented and dedicated FLCA volunteers.

Please send a cheque (membership fee \$25.00 a year) to the Farlain Lake Community Association, 37 Andrew Drive, Penetanguishene, Ontario L9M 1R2

Further membership information and application forms can be obtained by contacting Elizabeth Di Chiara at elizabeth@cscm.org.

Thank you for your support!
Your association needs you! You need your association!