

Frequently Asked Questions, Spencerville Well Reports

The below questions and answers have been prepared by Township staff in regards to water quality concerns in the Village of Spencerville, based off of the information reported by JP2G Consulting, The Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks, and the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit. The Township of Edwardsburgh Cardinal encourages residents to review both reports, available on our website at www.twpec.ca/spencerville-well-reports or as a hardcopy, available at the Township office during regular business hours.

What causes well contamination?

There are many factors that can affect the quality of water in your well. When bacteria from a contamination source is able to enter your well, the water can become contaminated and, in some cases, unsafe to drink. Proper well construction and maintenance can help prevent contaminants from entering your well. A heavy rainfall, snow melt or drought conditions can increase the potential for well contamination as it helps bacteria find its way through the ground or aquifer to your well.

Why are so many wells in the Village of Spencerville affected?

Based on the available results and information, it appears that the identified adverse water quality results are the result of the highly vulnerable geological setting. Additional information about the geology of the study area is available in the Ministry of Environment Parks and Conservation's technical report.

Was the municipal sewer system the cause of the adverse results?

Closed Circuit Television, (CCTV), inspection work was conducted on sewer lines throughout the Village. There were two defects found in Charles Street that were promptly corrected. Neither site showed any apparent indication of leakage. The Ministry determined that the adverse results do not appear to be related to a significant point source of humanoid fecal contamination that would be found in a sewer line breakage.

What about the new development and additional 4 wells drilled on David Street?

The results of the study conducted by JP2G Consulting and the technical report prepared by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks determine that the adverse results are not from the recent activities on David Street, nor do they appear to be from any point source of contamination. The use of the four wells is not expected to result in interference with other existing wells in the village.

Why wasn't a boil water advisory issued?

The Health Unit reports that a boil water advisory is usually issued when a water system serving the general public has been affected and the water may be unsafe to drink. Boil water advisories may be issued for municipally run systems, or privately owned water systems that serve the public such as a mobile home park or campground. A boil water advisory may be issued to private home owners if there is an incident of point source contamination that has contaminated the aquifer. This was not the case in Spencerville. Private well owners are

responsible for testing their own wells and are notified of the results via the lab report in the mail or by calling in and entering their PIN number. It is then the well owner's responsibility to take action such as boiling their water or using an alternate source while they undertake corrective action. The Health Unit will provide guidance.

Does the depth of my well make a difference in water quality?

A study conducted in the 1980s determined that wells in the Village of Spencerville should be dug and cased to access a deeper, less vulnerable aquifer. The Ministry's recent report is supportive of this recommendation as wells dug to a deeper depth with deeper grouting are less vulnerable to surface contamination. The report notes that the deeper construction is not entirely protective, although there is evidence to suggest that it provides added protection compared to those wells dug to the minimum regulatory requirements under The Ontario Water Resources Act Regulation 903.

How can I access my well record?

A well record provides general information about a well at the time of construction. Well owners are advised to keep their well record in a safe place. Some well records are available on the MECP website here: <https://www.ontario.ca/environment-and-energy/map-well-records>. The Ministry notes that not all of the records could be obtained for the wells that were sampled. The professional well driller that constructed your well may also have this information on file.

Does the Township have a Spill Contingency Plan with respect to the municipal sewer system?

Yes. The Township has an *Operation, Maintenance and Spill Prevention Plan*, last updated in October, 2015. Township staff will review the plan and make any updates as necessary, as a result of the assessments completed.

What actions will the Township take as a result of this study?

Council will review the reports and recommendations made in order to determine next steps. The Ministry's technical report recommends that the Township consider undertaking a more robust study to assess variations in the water quality in the village. Based on the findings, the Township may consider the need for a bylaw to ensure appropriate well construction or treatment is placed on future development or an ongoing education and notification program.

Ministry of Environment Conservation and Parks, Leeds and Grenville Health Unit and Township of Edwardsburgh Cardinal staff are available to answer your questions.

MECP: 1(800)565-4923
Health Unit: 1(800)660-5853
TWPEC: (613) 658-3055