



# Where Does My Water Come From?

**D**rinking water comes from either underground or surface water sources.

Groundwater is found in the tiny spaces between soil particles and in cracks in underground rock. Aquifers are the underground areas of soil or rock where substantial quantities of water are found, and are the water source for wells and springs. Of all the fresh water in the world, two thirds is underground, making groundwater one of the Earth's most valuable resources.

## London District Chiefs Council Drinking Water Source Protection

22361 Austin Line, Bothwell, Ontario N0P 1C0  
Tel. 519-692-5868 Fax. 519-692-5976

[www.sfns.on.ca](http://www.sfns.on.ca)

This project is a communications tool provided by the LDCC, funded through the Ontario Drinking Water Stewardship Program. This grant is to help raise awareness within the First Nation communities regarding their sources of drinking water.



## First Nations with the London District Chiefs Council



Surface water is the water found in oceans lakes, rivers streams and ponds. Most Canadians get their drinking water from surface water sources. These two water sources – groundwater and surface water – are interconnected and affect each other. If one water source becomes contaminated, there is a good possibility that the contaminant will eventually make its way into, and contaminate, the other water source.

In Ontario about 80 per cent of residents get their drinking water from surface water and 20 per cent from groundwater sources.



**A**side from Caldwell First Nation members and Aamjiwnaang First Nation purchasing municipal water, the remaining six First Nations manage their own drinking water supplies. Chippewas of Kettle and Stony Point First Nation have their drinking water source from Lake Huron. Bkejwanong Territory (Walpole Island First Nation) has their supply drawn from the St. Clair River. Chippewas of the Thames, Oneida Nation of the Thames and Delaware Nation rely on groundwater as their communal drinking water source. Munsee-Delaware First Nation purchases some service from Chippewas of the Thames Water Treatment Plant but most community members rely on private wells.



# Caldwell First Nation



Caldwell First Nation members lived in the Point Pelee area from before 1763. They served as allies of the British during the War of 1812. In consideration of this service, they were promised land at Point Pelee. The First Nation continued

to occupy Point Pelee, with the support of the government, until encroachment by settlers and other circumstances that forced them to leave.

At this time, members of the Caldwell Nation are spread wide and for the most part receive drinking water service from municipalities. At the request of the Caldwell Nation, this information panel will be dedicated to their historical waters of Lake Erie

Overall, the majority of the people in the Thames Watershed & Region are supplied with treated surface water supplies taken from the Great Lakes. Several of the water intakes and treatment plants that supply this water are located outside the Thames Watershed & Region. For example, the largest urban centre, the City of London, has pipelines providing water from both Lake Huron and Lake Erie. Other smaller communities also receive treated water via these pipelines. In Chatham-Kent and Elgin, several different surface intakes and water treatment plants supply potable water to communities across the Thames Watershed & Region.

## Surface Water Intakes on Lake Erie

Surface water is the primary source of drinking water for residents in the Thames Watershed & Region. Pumping stations pump raw water from Lake Huron, Lake St. Clair and Lake Erie to Water Treatment Plants (WTPs) where the water is treated, often stored in reservoirs and passed through pipelines to residents.

The Union Water Treatment Plant is located west of Leamington in Essex County. It takes surface water from Lake Erie and serves the Town of Leamington and parts of the Town of Lakeshore.

The Wheatley WTP derives its surface water from Lake Erie south of Wheatley. The Wheatley WTP supplies drinking water to the communities of Wheatley and Tilbury in Chatham-Kent. It also supplies water to portions of the Municipalities of Leamington and Lakeshore.

P.O. Box 388 Leamington, ON N8H 3W3  
Tel. 519-678-3831 Fax. 519-326-3949



## Lake Erie

Lake Erie is actually three lakes in one, three distinct basins linked together along an east-west axis and separated by shoals and reefs. The Western Basin, which stretches from Toledo in the United States at the western tip of the lake to Point Pelee in Ontario, is the shallowest with an average depth of around seven metres. That drops to 18 metres in the large Central Basin, and down again to 25 metres in the Eastern Basin, hitting a maximum of 64 metres in the deepest holes. Because the whole lake is relatively shallow, the water warms quickly in the spring and cools again as quickly in the fall. The topographic features that make Lake Erie a fishing paradise also place it in environmental jeopardy.



The South Chatham-Kent WTP to the lower portion of the Municipality of Chatham-Kent. It came into operation in May, 2003 and replaced both the Erie Beach-Erieau Water System and the Blenheim Area

Water System. It also serves the communities of Charing Cross, Merlin, Port Alma, Rondeau Bay Estates, Shrewsbury and South Buxton.

The Chatham WTP receives its raw water from the same raw water pumping station as the South Chatham-Kent WTP at Erie Beach. The Chatham WTP supplies treated water to Chatham and the central parts of Chatham-Kent including the communities of Pain Court, Grande Pointe, Mitchell's Bay, Dresden, Tupperville and Thamesville.

The West Elgin Water Treatment Plant has a Lake Erie intake south of West Lorne at Eagle. The plant service the Municipalities of West Elgin, Dutton Dunwich, and Southwest Middlesex. It also supplies water to the Village of Newbury and the community of Bothwell in Chatham-Kent.