

## 5 FIRST PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTRE

The first public meeting was held at the Christ Church on November 21, 2007. The public open house included:

- Presentations by the consulting team, Hamilton-Halton Watershed Stewardship Program (HHWSP) and the Ontario Rural Wastewater Centre
- A series of poster boards which defined
  - The study areas
  - Study goal, objectives and key tasks
  - The municipal Class Environmental Assessment process
  - Existing environmental conditions
  - Key findings
- Circulation of Workshop Participant Workbook.

A workshop was also held after the presentations. In the workshop individuals formed small groups and discussed the questions that were posed in the Workshop participant Workbook as noted above.

In total approximately 160 people attended the open house including City staff, members of the project team, members of the local community groups and members of the general public.

A detailed synopsis of the participant feedback, general questions, comments and concerns, response to workshop booklet questions and additional comments is provided in **Appendix M**. Provided below is an overview as to the content of the public input as well as the response to the questionnaire.

### Participant Feedback

- City staff were asked if future development was going to be put on hold (including current applications). A City planner responded that he was not aware of any current applications and that this study is not a precursor to a planned development. Rather, it is a study to develop a preferred management strategy for the area, with the interest of protecting water resources to the extent possible.
- The HHWSP representative was asked why funding only applies to homes near municipal wells. It was noted that this is the first year of the program and funding is limited. The decision was therefore made to start with those residences.
- One homeowner asked how you know when your septic system is ready to be pumped. It was noted, in response, that septic systems should be pumped when they are 1/3<sup>rd</sup> full and pumped on average every 2-5 years. Other signs include sewage backing up into the basement, odour near the leaching bed or when you see wet, mushy areas near the bed.

### Workshop Booklet Questions

- The features or resources that were valued the most varied and included the rural setting, birds, animals and nature in general, natural features of the Niagara Escarpment and the wells and well water
- The potential issues that were identified most frequently include quality of water for domestic consumption, quantity of water for domestic consumption, development impacts to well water quantity and quality
- Recommendations to address the key issues included development control, an open process (between the City and the community), access and recording of data, promotion of water conservation measures and assistance with respect to water cisterns and wells.
- Participants noted that they would be willing to implement (or participate in) a community liaison committee, upgrading their septic system, drill a deeper well, provide information for tracking purposes and install water conservation measures.
- Barriers to implementation included politics, cost, urban sprawl, lack of professional help and lack of regulations and inspections.
- The priority tools or information that residents would like to see included information about drilling wells, further understanding of groundwater quality and general municipal assistance