

## REPORT TO COUNTY COUNCIL

# 2024 Drinking Water System Performance Update

**To:** Warden and Members of County Council

**From:** Director of Public Works

## RECOMMENDATION

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1. That County Council receive Report PW 2025-33 entitled “2024 Drinking Water System Performance Update” as information.

## REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

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- On February 26, 2025, Oxford County Council received Report PW 2025-10 entitled “2024 Drinking Water System Performance,” including the 2024 Annual Drinking Water System Summary Reports. The report, in part, summarized outcomes of the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP) annual inspections.
- At the time of the report, only nine out of 17 drinking water system inspections had been completed, and Oxford County staff committed to updating Council again when the remaining eight results were completed.
- The results of the remaining MECP inspections (Bright, Dereham Centre, Drumbo-Princeton, Ingersoll, Oxford South, Plattsville, Tillsonburg and Woodstock) have now been received and bring the County’s overall average compliance rating to 98.8%.

## IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

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As required by legislation, the 2024 Annual Drinking Water Systems Summary Reports were posted on the County’s website by February 28, 2025. The remaining MECP inspection ratings are now available and will also be posted to the County’s website.

## Financial Impact

There are no financial impacts as a result of this report. Any required actions that will result in expenditures have been accounted for in the 2025 Business Plan and Budget for the respective drinking water systems.


## Communications

The drinking water system performance reports are available to the public on the County's website as legislatively required by February 28, 2025. They can be found at [www.oxfordcounty.ca/water-wastewater](http://www.oxfordcounty.ca/water-wastewater). This report will also be shared directly with Area Municipal Chief Administrative Officers and Public Works senior management, respectively. An update will be published to the County's webpage with the 2024 Annual System Summary Reports to include the remaining MECP inspection ratings and non-compliance findings.

## 2023-2026 STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Council approved the **2023-2026 Strategic Plan** on September 13, 2023. The Plan outlines 39 goals across three strategic pillars that advance Council's vision of "Working together for a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable future." These pillars are: (1) *Promoting community vitality*, (2) *Enhancing environmental sustainability*, and (3) *Fostering progressive government*.

The recommendation in this report supports the following Strategic Plan Pillars and Goals:

PILLAR 1	PILLAR 2	PILLAR 3
		
Promoting community vitality	Enhancing environmental sustainability	Fostering progressive government
		Goal 3.1 – Continuous improvement and results-driven solutions

See: [Oxford County 2023-2026 Strategic Plan](#)

## DISCUSSION

### Background

In accordance with the *Safe Drinking Water Act of 2002*, the 2024 Annual Drinking Water Systems Summary Reports ([Annual Reports - Oxford County](#)) have been prepared for each of the County's 17 municipal drinking water systems. These reports are presented to Council and made available to the public by February 28 each year. Under Schedule 22 and Section 11 of O. Reg. 170/03, drinking water system owners must prepare reports that provide the following information:

- brief description of the system;
- any incidents of adverse water quality, inadequate disinfection, or where any mandatory requirement was not met;
- all test results;
- a summary of the amount of water supplied with a comparison to the system's rated capacity, and;
- the results of the annual MECP drinking water system inspection.

## Comments

Every year, the MECP inspects each drinking water system to assess compliance with the requirements of the *Safe Drinking Water Act*, 2002 and the *Ontario Water Resource Act*, 1990. As the MECP's inspections take place during their fiscal year (April to March), inspection reports are not always finalized in time to be included in the County's annual reports. Overall, 2024 demonstrated the continuous exceptional performance at the County's water treatment and distribution facilities as reflected in the MECP inspection reports and ratings.

At the time of the report to County Council (PW 2025-10), only nine out of 17 drinking water system inspections had been completed. The results of the remaining MECP inspections (Bright, Dereham Centre, Drumbo-Princeton, Ingersoll, Oxford South, Plattsville, Tillsonburg and Woodstock) have now been received and bring the County's overall average compliance rating to 98.8%. A summary of all 17 drinking water system inspection ratings is outlined in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Municipal Water System Inspection Ratings**

<b>System</b>	<b>MECP Inspection Rating</b>
Beachville	100%
Bright	100%
Brownsville	100%
Dereham Centre	100%
Drumbo-Princeton	100%
Embro	100%
Hickson	100%
Ingersoll	96%
Innerkip	92%
Lakeside	100%
Mount Elgin	100%
Oxford South (Norwich, Otterville and Springford)	95%
Plattsville	100%
Tavistock	100%

Thamesford	100%
Tillsonburg	100%
Woodstock	96%

As previously presented in PW 2025-10, two non-compliances for the Innerkip drinking water system were noted due to irretrievable continuous monitoring data resulting from a UPS failure which spanned approximately 40 minutes. Raw wells were locked out for the duration of the UPS failure and the UPS has since been replaced. It is important to note that during this timeframe, the plant was still equipped with automatic alarms and shut offs to ensure the water supplied to distribution continued to meet Ontario Drinking Water Standards limits and that County Water Operators attended the site and confirmed that the chlorine residuals and plant operations were normal. The MECP did not require any further corrective actions from this non-compliance.

One non-compliance was noted for the Ingersoll drinking water system when County personnel proactively reported to the MECP that a sample was not collected for the section of reconstructed watermain under the road. All disinfection procedures were followed, and two consecutive sets of bacteriological samples were collected. Refresher training was provided for staff, and no further action was required.

One administrative non-compliance was noted for the Oxford South drinking water system. A notice of issue resolution for adverse water quality was not received by the local Medical Officer of Health (MOH) and the MECP Spills Action Centre within the required 7 days of resolution. Personnel will now request a delivery notice when sending issue resolutions to confirm successful submission.

Two non-conformances were noted in the Woodstock drinking water system inspection. During watermain swabbing, a well flow meter failed to detect flow, thereby preventing chlorination. Improperly disinfected water was flushed to waste before system pressure was restored. The event was promptly reported to the MOH and MECP, and confirmatory bacteriological samples were collected after maintenance was complete. One sample was found to contain total coliforms of 1CFU/100mL and was promptly reported to the MOH and MECP. Resamples were found to be free of total coliforms and no further action was required.

## CONCLUSIONS

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The 2024 Annual MECP Inspection report ratings demonstrate Public Works' continued oversight of the County's Municipal Drinking Water Systems in order to provide a safe, reliable and sustainable supply of municipal drinking water for its residential and business users.

The County continues to institute industry best management standards to annually monitor the levels of service and financial performance of its water systems and to ensure water assets are maintained in optimal condition through effective preventative maintenance, and optimized asset decision-making.

## SIGNATURES

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Original signed by

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