

What you do could potentially harm a community's drinking water.

## Is Your Cottage within a Protected Public Water Supply Area?

### What is a Protected Public Water Supply Area?

A Protected Public Water Supply Area (PPWSA) is an area of land around a source of public drinking water that has been protected under Section 39 of the Water Resources Act. The area of protected land is called a watershed and typically will include any land where all precipitation drains towards the water supply intake. The watershed area is generally based on topography.

### Am I inside a PPWSA?

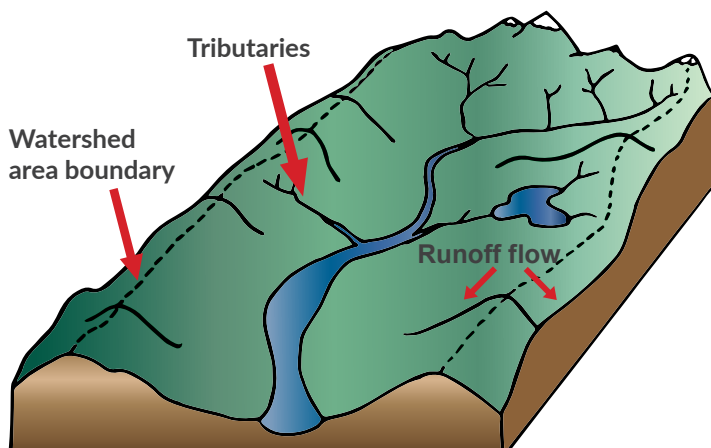
If you are unsure whether your cottage may fall within one of these protected areas, you can check the mapping application within the Water Resources Portal here: [maps.gov.nl.ca/water/](https://maps.gov.nl.ca/water/), or contact the nearest Water Resources Management Division (WRMD) office.

If you are applying for crown land to build a cottage, you will be notified if it is within a PPWSA. **Buyer beware** when privately purchasing a cottage; the land may be inside a PPWSA. A seller may not always disclose this information.

### Why is it important I be aware that my cottage is within a PPWSA?

If a cottage lot (whether it be a grant, lease or license to occupy) is located within a PPWSA, you are required to apply for approval to complete any major activities and developments under the Water Resources Act. This regulatory process is in place to help preserve the water quality of the source and is governed by Policy Directive W.R. 95-01. Should a drinking water contamination event be traced back to your activity, you could be liable under the Act. The Act and Policy Directive can be found here:

[mae.gov.nl.ca/waterres/regulations/index.html](https://mae.gov.nl.ca/waterres/regulations/index.html)



**If your cottage is inside the buffer zones around waterbodies, additional restrictions may apply. Standard buffer zones are as follows:**

Water Body	Width of Buffer Zones
Intake pond or lake	a minimum of <b>150 metres</b>
River intake	a minimum of <b>150 metres</b> for a distance of one km upstream and 100 m downstream
Main river channel	a minimum of <b>75 metres</b>
Major tributaries, lakes or ponds	a minimum of <b>50 metres</b>
Other water bodies	a minimum of <b>30 metres</b>

### Is your cottage remote?

If a cottage is not accessible by conventional motor vehicle, it is considered remote. In these instances, it is important that cottage owners be aware that constructing an access road or trail requires additional permits. New ATV and snowmobile trails must be approved by WRMD prior to construction.

### What requires a permit application?

- Construction of a cottage or cabin
- Accessory buildings that include ground disturbance (e.g. shed)
- Installation or replacement of a septic system including pit privy
- Installation or replacement of a water well
- Demolition of buildings
- Clearing land or paving
- Major landscaping that includes ground disturbance
- Installation of a bridge, culvert, or wharf
- Cutting a trail and/or road construction

### What activities do not require a permit application?

- Regular maintenance of your property including:
  - Lawn mowing
  - Snow removal
  - Removal of dead or fallen trees
- Tree/flowerbed planting
- Domestic gardening
- Painting or renovations that do not require ground disturbance

Ground disturbance includes activities such as:

- excavating
- digging/backfilling
- trenching
- drilling/auguring
- topsoil stripping

A good rule of thumb is: **if you need to use heavy equipment, you will need to apply for a permit. If you are unsure whether an activity or development requires a permit, please contact the nearest WRMD office.**

### How do I apply for a permit?

Applications can be found online: [mae.gov.nl.ca/waterres/regulations/appforms/index.html](http://mae.gov.nl.ca/waterres/regulations/appforms/index.html). If you have questions or need help with this application, please call the nearest WRMD office.

### How long will a permit take?

PPWSA permits typically take four to six weeks to process, so be sure to apply early. All applications are initially reviewed for completeness, and then referred to the community for a minimum 15-day review and comment period. WRMD will assess each application on an individual basis and will recommend either approval, modification, or rejection.

### Let us work together to safeguard our drinking water supplies.

Municipal Affairs and Environment  
Water Resources Management Division

[waterandsewer@gov.nl.ca](mailto:waterandsewer@gov.nl.ca)

709.729.4817 Eastern

709.292.4280 Central

709.637.2542 Western and Labrador