



Canadian Environmental Law Association
L'Association canadienne du droit de l'environnement

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April 15, 1992

SUBMISSION TO THE CITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

**Re: Establishing a City of Toronto
Water Conservation Committee**

The Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA) encourages your City Services Committee to establish a Water Conservation Committee as suggested in your report #6. We think the R.V. Anderson study is an excellent one and is long overdue.

Currently there is a confusing array of water conservation initiatives under way and this Committee could co-ordinate City involvement in all these conservation efforts.

Other initiatives under way include:

- All of the Environmental Assessments (EA) under way or planned for portions of the sewer and water treatment systems. These EAs are considering water conservation as an alternative to system expansions;
- The recently completed consultation to plan a water efficiency strategy for Ontario which will likely have many implications for the City;
- As well, the Province is setting up a Crown Corporation to regulate and ensure provincially owned water and waste water treatment plants that are self-supporting. Some level of co-ordination between these facilities and the municipality owned facilities will be necessary;
- Metro and the GTA's projections and strategies to provide treatment for future growth are contradictory. It will be important for the City to co-ordinate your long-term planning for growth with these other jurisdictions.

It will be critical for the users to support and understand the necessity of the growing costs of water which will result from full cost pricing. Having the public involved in a City Committee will facilitate public acceptance of policy and rate changes. An effective communication and education program will be essential to

the success of a water conservation program. There are real concerns that these costs not become prohibitive for the needy and issues of equitable costs are best addressed by a Committee such as the one proposed.

Long-term planning in an ecosystem context will be needed since Toronto shares its water resources with other Lake Ontario municipalities.

Climate change specialists are predicting that future conflicts could result from diminished volumes in the Great Lakes which will result from global warming. In this context water conservation is a necessity to prevent these problems.

When the Toronto Remedial Action Plan for waterfront clean-up reaches the implementation stage, there will likely be a need for extraordinary funds for the City's share of clean-up of the historical pollution of the Harbour in its contaminated sediments. Savings gained from conservation are one logical source of such funds as the R.V. Anderson report suggests.

The Province's new water efficiency strategy will likely change plumbing, consumer, and building codes to mandate the use of water-efficient appliances. Right now there are not many Canadian sources for these appliances. This kind of manufacturing base could be sought by Toronto to create jobs in the city.

Changes in the management of one of the public's most fundamental resources--its water--demand careful consultation and public involvement. We would urge you to utilize a Water Conservation Committee to guide this policy, its communication to the public, and to assist in co-ordinating and planning with other levels of government.

Yours sincerely,

CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW ASSOCIATION



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Co-ordinator