

## Water testing to start

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St. Marys Cement will begin pumping tests on its proposed Flamborough quarry site next week.

In a press release issued Monday, the aggregate company announced its intentions to proceed with the first of three tests "on or about July 21."

The tests, which will be under daily scrutiny by representatives of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment (MOE), the City of Hamilton, the Region of Halton, Conservation Halton and the Hamilton Public Health Service, are being done to collect information about groundwater and surface water resources in the area. The information will be used by the MOE and the city to evaluate the proposed quarry's potential impacts on local water resources.

On July 8, the MOE approved St. Marys' application for a temporary permit to take water (PTTW) to carry out three pumping tests on its property on the northeast corner of 11th Concession Road East and Milborough Line. The permit will expire June 30 of next year.

The anti-quarry group, FORCE (Friends of Rural Communities and the Environment), intended to appeal the permit's approval but learned last week that if the term of a permit is less than a year, there is no avenue for appeal. FORCE chair Graham Flint said the group's lawyers are exploring legal options to halt the testing.

He reaffirmed that stance Tuesday, expressing surprise and disappointment that St. Marys is "trying to go ahead so aggressively" with the testing in spite of the knowledge that potential legal challenges are being investigated. He also charged that St. Marys isn't fulfilling the permit condition that requires the company to send written notification to well owners within 1,000 metres of the test site, seven days in advance of the pumping test.

"Many homeowners on Timber Run Court have not been contacted," he said.

Despite the reservations of quarry opponents that the testing will harm the local water supply, company officials maintain that it won't impact water resources in the area. They urge residents to contact them with any concerns or questions during the testing and pledge immediate response.

"Safeguards are in place as part of the permit to ensure that water quality and quantity will not be impacted," said John Moroz, general manager and vice-president of St. Marys CBM Aggregates. "The site will be continually monitored during the testing and I encourage residents to contact us with any concerns."

Area residents can call 1-866-602-0080. The phone line will be monitored around-the-clock on testing days.

The permit allows for six to eight days of testing in each of three separate pumping tests. The first test, which will run between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., will involve the controlled extraction of groundwater from wells installed on the property. Continuous pumping will take place over six to eight days, with the limit of extraction set at 3,000,000 litres per day.

Water levels for each of the monitoring wells and surface water stations will be monitored during the testing and results will be posted daily at [www.flamboroughquarry.ca](http://www.flamboroughquarry.ca). Additional information about the PTTW and the pumping tests will also be available to residents who visit the website.

Representatives of Golder Associates, a third-party hydrogeology firm approved by the MOE, will be providing independent oversight for the testing program as directed by the ministry.

Last week, Carl Slater, manager of technical support services at the MOE's Hamilton office, told the Review that while most pumping test permits to take water expire in just weeks or months, an extended period was necessary for the St. Marys permit because the ministry imposed "significant conditions on reporting and sharing information" between the three tests. He added that the permit has 37 extraordinary conditions attached to it, "twice as many as (required) for other pumping tests."

"We have all the technical input which demonstrates this testing can be carried out without impact on adjacent water users," Slater said.



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