

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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SUBJECT: Ohio EPA Certifies Painesville’s Source Water Protection Plan

Ohio EPA Certifies Painesville’s Source Water Protection Plan

This is the first plan that protects a Lake Erie drinking water system

PAINESVILLE, OH - The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) has endorsed and certified the City of Painesville’s Source Water Protection Plan (SWPP), a plan aimed at protecting Lake Erie as a source of drinking water. Ohio EPA presented the certificate at the city council meeting on Monday, August 15, at 7:30 p.m. at City Hall (7 Richmond Street, Painesville, Ohio 44077). Painesville’s SWPP is the first certified plan in Ohio for a facility that uses Lake Erie as a source of drinking water.

“Lake Erie is the source of drinking water for the City of Painesville and the surrounding area,” says George P. Ginnis, the Superintendent of the Painesville Water Division. “Although we treat our source water to meet federal and state drinking water standards, this plan identifies and prioritizes contaminant sources, and offers strategies to protect Lake Erie. If we keep contaminants out of Lake Erie and its tributaries like the Grand River, we keep contaminants out of our drinking water.”

Producing the Source Water Protection Plan was a two-year, joint effort among the Painesville Water Division, the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), The Nature Conservancy, Lake County Soil & Water Conservation District, Lake County GIS Department and the Lake County General Health District. Certification also enhances the Painesville Water Division’s eligibility for funding programs as some funding sources award additional priority points for applicants with certified plans.

“This is a valuable example of planning efforts to engage local, regional, state and federal interests in protecting a Lake Erie drinking water intake,” says George Ginnis, “By taking steps to protect the Grand River and Lake Erie from storm water runoff from area up upstream, our community can help reduce the costs of their water and better ensure a safe and high-quality supply of drinking water.”

The Painesville Drinking Water Facility, which is located in Mentor and serves approximately 25,000 people, receives its source water from the section of Lake Erie directly off Mentor Headlands Beach in Mentor.

“We are pleased that NOACA, The Nature Conservancy and the Lake Soil & Water Conservation District were able to provide technical and planning assistance to develop this plan,” says George Ginnis, “This plan could become a model for other Lake Erie water systems.” This plan also represents the successful collaboration among agencies and non-government organizations working to address non-point source pollution in Ohio. “It is vitally important that we work together to develop plans and implement strategies that will keep pollutants out of our rivers, Lake Erie, and ultimately our drinking water,” says Karen Adair of The Nature Conservancy.

The Painesville Water Division would like to particularly acknowledge Pamela Davis from the Northeast Ohio Areawide Coordinating Agency (NOACA), Maurine Orndorff from the Lake County Soil & Water Conservation District, Karen Adair from the Nature Conservancy, Richard J. Kotapish from the Lake County GIS Department, and Laura Kuns from the Lake County General Health District for their expertise and commitment towards completing the Painesville Source Water Protection Plan.

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