

MOUNT ALBERT WATER SUPPLY UPGRADES ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT STUDY

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (AS OF AUGUST 31, 2020)

The Mount Albert Water Supply Upgrades Municipal Class Environmental Assessment study (EA Study) is looking to identify improvements to the water supply system and water quality in the Mount Albert community in the Town of East Gwillimbury.

In December 2019, a [FAQ](#) was posted with information on the project as well as details on the Mount Albert Water Supply System, water quality and how water rates are determined for Mount Albert.

Between July 2 and July 15, 2020, York Region updated the community on the project's progress and offered the opportunity to provide input on the evaluation framework to be used to evaluate alternative solutions. The following FAQ's will answer some of the common questions and comments received.

Will this project address the hardness of the water in Mount Albert?

"Hard" water contains calcium and magnesium carbonate. When water is "hard" it can be difficult to lather and scale forms in pipes and appliances.

Many people choose to install water softeners in their homes to reduce hardness, making washing easier and reducing mineral buildup. As an alternative being considered in this EA Study, York Region may install iron and manganese removal treatment at the well facilities which would improve how often you may clean your softener. However, hardness would not be removed with the treatment systems being considered for Mount Albert. More information is available at york.ca/drinkingwater

Who sets my water rates and how will costs be considered when evaluating the recommended solution?

York Region with the approval of the Regional Council sets Region-wide rates to supply water and treat wastewater for its nine local cities and towns. In Mount Albert, the Town of East Gwillimbury applies a rate fee to cover costs to deliver water to its residents and to collect wastewater. Please see the Town of East Gwillimbury's [Rates and Fees](#) for more information.

This project is not expected to result in an increase to the Region's water rates. The Region's current water rates include financial reserves for future rehabilitation and upgrades to water supply infrastructure across York Region including improvements being considered by this EA Study.

Will limiting future community growth in Mount Albert improve my water quality?

The Mount Albert Drinking Water system has sufficient supply capacity and storage to service the approved population growth to 2041. Limiting community growth will have no impact on improving water quality in the Mount Albert Drinking Water System.

Why are system pressures lower after the South Elevated Tower was retired?

The North Elevated Tower was built to provide drinking water storage for all of Mount Albert and allow the smaller South Tower to be retired. When the North Elevated Tower is operating at lower storage levels it is possible some homes may experience lower pressure. Investigations as part of this study are underway to assess operational changes at the wells and the North Elevated Tower to improve water pressure in Mount Albert.

Can the level of iron in drinking water impact my health?

Iron is an essential element in human nutrition and Health Canada states that there is no evidence to indicate that concentrations of iron commonly present in food or drinking water (including at the levels found in the Mount Albert well water) represent any hazard to human health. At the concentrations found in Mount Albert drinking water, the amount of iron from drinking two litres of water per day is still much lower than iron intake from typical diets.

For more information view [Health Canada's document on iron](#) or contact Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653.

When will the Mount Albert EA Study be completed and the preferred alternative solution implemented?

Based on community feedback York Region is evaluating alternative solutions.

A recommendation on a preferred solution is expected to be presented to the community, stakeholders and agencies in late Fall 2020. The study documentation will then be prepared and filed for a 30-day review by the public, government agencies and other stakeholders. If there are no outstanding concerns raised during this review period, York Region can then proceed to implement the preferred solution.

We want to hear from you!

The second open house will be online in Fall 2020. Join in to hear additional details on each of the alternative solutions, results of the evaluation and a recommendation for a preferred solution. To submit questions, comments or to be added to the study mailing list, please contact:

Luis Carvalho, M.Sc.(Eng.), P.Eng., PMP
Senior Project Manager
Environmental Services
York Region
1-877-464-9675 ext. 75015
luis.carvalho@york.ca
Fax: 905-830-6927