



Federal fund needed to improve critical water infrastructure: RCCAO

Leaky and broken watermain transmission pipes are draining millions of litres of water from municipal systems across Ontario every year.

Over time, the pipes and mains get old and fall into disrepair. Failing to fix them can lead to drinking water contamination, sewage backups and flooding.

Across Toronto and Ontario, significant sections of municipal water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure are well past their useful life.

RCCAO is calling on the federal government to establish a fund that will help municipalities fix those leaky pipes and crumbling sewers. Such a fund would allow for the repair of critical infrastructure that we all rely on.

RCCAO outlined the considerable cost to Ontario municipalities from leaking or broken watermain transmission pipes and deteriorating sewer, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure in a video released in April.

Deteriorating pipes and infrastructure result in too much treated drinking water going into the ground every year. This is incredibly inefficient and almost singlehandedly defeating Ontario's water conservation goals.

The ongoing use of combined sewers in big urban centres is also resulting in untreated sewage being released into the Great Lakes and municipal waterways every year.

A study funded by RCCAO and conducted by the University of Toronto found that up to 25 per cent of all drinking water in Toronto is lost due to pipe leakage.

Thirty per cent of the energy used to pump the water could be saved if leakage is addressed, which would result in savings of more than \$700 million per year, according to the findings of the study.

Funding infrastructure repairs and replacement would also create jobs and dovetails with the federal government's objective of building climate-resilient infrastructure.

Every \$1 billion invested in water infrastructure construction can create up to 11,500 direct jobs and 47,000 indirect jobs.

The population of Ontario is expected to grow by more than 30 per cent by 2041, which will strain water infrastructure even further. Unfortunately, it often takes a burst watermain or sewage overflow to remind us how dependent we are on these normally steadfast systems.

Therefore, planning ahead and having proper funding in place to fix and replace this critical water infrastructure is essential.

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