



The Regional Municipality of Durham

# News Release

January 10, 2018

## Durham and York Regions release results of study on strategies to reduce phosphorus from the Duffin Creek Plant

**Whitby, Ontario** – The Regional Municipality of Durham and The Regional Municipality of York have completed the study requested by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change on strategies to further improve phosphorous discharges from the Duffin Creek Water Pollution Control Plant (Duffin Creek Plant). The Duffin Creek Plant is located in the City of Pickering.

In 2016, Durham and York Regions undertook the Phosphorus Reduction Action Plan (PRAP) study using an international team of leading wastewater treatment experts to research the following:

- The level of phosphorus removal the Duffin Creek Plant can achieve with its current wastewater treatment processes
- The level of phosphorus removal the Duffin Creek Plant can achieve with additional wastewater treatment
- Assess the feasibility of reducing effluent phosphorus during the seasonal algae growth window

The phosphorus reduction study spanned more than 18 months and included a peer review by an independent expert in phosphorus removal strategies. The Town of Ajax participated in the PRAP study. Through this collaborative process, the Town and Regions were able to identify key points of consensus and variance.

### Key findings

The Phosphorus Reduction Action Plan reviewed optimization strategies for the processes currently in place at the plant and a range of potential additional treatment options. The proposed strategy to optimize the existing treatment processes at the Duffin Creek Plant to lower phosphorus concentrations will use existing processes with upgrades to effectively remove phosphorous to levels lower than current regulatory limits.

The proposed strategy is an effective way to reduce phosphorus levels in the treated water discharged back into Lake Ontario. It also ensures the Duffin Creek Plant remains an environmental leader with the lowest phosphorus discharge limits of any plant discharging to the open waters of Lake Ontario while having the least impact on greenhouse gas emissions, which will remain relatively



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unchanged from current levels.

Durham and York Regions are proud of the exemplary record of the Duffin Creek Plant as an environmental leader in wastewater treatment. The Regions, along with the provincial and federal governments, have invested more than \$850 million over the past 10 years in upgraded technologies, equipment, training and best practices to ensure the Duffin Creek Plant continues to protect our near shore water and local environment.

Results of the [Phosphorus Reduction Action Plan](#) are available to the public on the project website. Residents are encouraged to view the report and will have 45 days to provide any comments or feedback to the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change.

For more information about the Duffin Creek Plant, please visit [durham.ca/outfallEA](http://durham.ca/outfallEA)

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