

NDACT to host Well Registration Workshop to help residents

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North Dufferin Agricultural and Community Taskforce (NDACT) is looking to increase the number of residents registered for a well program that aims to protect their water from a proposed quarry.

The Well Registration Workshop will be held on Saturday (Feb. 3) at the Horning's Mills Hall in Melancthon from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The purpose of the event is to increase the number of local residents within the targeted participation area to sign up for the WELLness Check Program.

"We want to be sure that the community that might be affected by possible water disruptions, should Strada apply for a licence and be granted one, are protected," said Carl Cosack, NDACT community liaison.

The WELLness Check Program is one of the key schedules in an agreement signed by NDACT and Strada Aggregate back in June of 2023. The program will assist with understanding existing environmental conditions, monitoring those conditions, and ensuring the proposed quarry, if approved for a licence, will have no adverse effects on the surrounding water wells and natural environment. The program will also see that should there be an impact on a well or natural feature, Strada would finance solutions.

By participating in the program, residents will give Strada Aggregate a baseline to reference the quality and quantity of their water if, in the future, there are any impacts brought on by quarrying below the water table.

"Strada has committed to follow the science, which we're really appreciative of. However, no matter what humans put their minds to, one should expect that there are some unknowns and some things that are not foreseeable; we just have to presume that," said Cosack.

Speaking with the Free Press, Cosack said NDACT has seen roughly 25 residents register for the WELLness Check Program thus far, which he notes is "nowhere near enough."

"The Aggregate Resources Act does a really poor job of protecting communities and people, and makes a homeowner find the fault of water issues on their budget and timeline. Strada has agreed not to follow that process. From a people point of view, that should be a big relief to them. If unforeseen issues crop up, there'll be somebody there right away," he said.

He added, "this process is like an insurance policy for homeowners. Hopefully, they will never have to call on it, but if they do, there is a system in place to make sure they don't run out of water."

During the workshop, members from NDACT will help residents through the paperwork required for the WELLness Check Program and be available to answer the public's questions.

"If you're looking at [forms] for the first time, it might be intimidating, so we will help residents fill out the paperwork, collect it and deliver it to Strada on their behalf," explained Cosack.

For more information about the NDACT and Strada Aggregate agreement, visit www.ndact.ca.