



September 10, 2014

## Experts visiting Ajax waterfront to examine algae issue first hand

*Excellent visuals of researchers gathering algae*

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**When:** Thursday, September 11, 2014 at 9:30 a.m.

**Where:** Rotary Park Pavilion, Rotary Park, 177 Lake Driveway W., Ajax.

**What:** A team of researchers will be completing fieldwork on the Ajax waterfront - site of some of the most extensive build-up of algae in the Great Lakes.

**Who:** Dr. Marty Auer, an expert in nuisance algae, will explain how the algae is created and how its growth can be prevented. *Dr. Auer is a professor of environmental engineering at Michigan Technological University who has been conducting research in respect of algae in the Great Lakes since 1979.* He has conducted research and published papers regarding water quality issues in all five Great Lakes and currently has ongoing studies in Lakes Huron, Michigan, and Ontario. Dr. Auer was a member of a 2006 working group assembled to provide technical information in contemplation of the Annex to the 2012 Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement and chaired the subgroup on phosphorus and algae (*cladophora*) in the Great Lakes. He was recently invited to participate in a working group by Environment Canada / United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) to develop new phosphorus loading targets for Lake Erie.

**Why:** The Ajax waterfront is rendered unusable each year by rotting algae floating in the water and accumulating along the shoreline. The algae is fed by phosphorus released in the effluent of the Duffin Creek Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP). The algae could be controlled by removing phosphorus from the effluent or discharging the effluent far enough offshore that it does not fuel algae growth. Unfortunately, the Regions of York and Durham, the owners of the plant, propose to do neither. In fact, the Regions want to triple the amount of discharge.

The need to fix the algae issue along the Ajax waterfront was a major issue in the recent provincial election. During the election, Ajax-Pickering MPP Joe Dickson pledged that a Liberal government would require the Regions to undertake a full Environmental Assessment of the WPCP and implement the best method of stopping the release of phosphorus that feeds algae growth along the Ajax Waterfront by 2017.

Sierra Club, Environmental Defence and Lake Ontario Waterkeeper have all supported the Town of Ajax's submissions to the Ontario Ministry of the Environment to deal with the algae issue related to the sewage treatment plant operations.

For more information, visit: [ajax.ca/wpcp](http://ajax.ca/wpcp) or [saveourwaterfrontnow.com](http://saveourwaterfrontnow.com).

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