

RCCAO says Ontario needs dedicated water infrastructure fund

By Peter Davey - Apr 26, 2021



Up to 25% of all drinking water in Toronto is lost due to pipe leakage, according to a study funded by the Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario. A new fund for municipal water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure could save municipalities from waiting until it's too late, the group says. Photo Credit: Olando, AdobeStock

Ontario needs a new dedicated fund to help municipalities “fix their leaky pipes and crumbling sewers”, states a call to action from the **Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO)**.

To bolster the plea for new funding, the [RCCAO](#) prepared an online video to further illustrate the importance of critical water infrastructure. It says a fund for municipal water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure could save municipalities from waiting until it's too late. While infrastructure ages, RCCAO warns, it falls into disrepair and raises the risk of drinking water contamination, sewage backups and flooding.

“Municipal water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure is often out of sight and out of mind for people – until there’s a problem, that is,” says RCCAO Executive Director Nadia Todorova in a statement to media. “A burst watermain or sewage overflow quickly reminds us of how dependent we are on these critical systems. We must ensure that these systems are kept in a state of good repair,” she adds.

An earlier [study](#) funded by RCCAO and conducted by the University of Toronto found that leaky and broken watermain transmission pipes are draining millions of cubic metres of water from municipal systems across Ontario. Up to 25% of all drinking water in Toronto is lost due to pipe leakage, the study found. The same study estimated that 30% of the energy used to pump the water could be saved if leakage is addressed, resulting in savings of more than \$700 million per year, as well as a reduction in energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

A municipal water, wastewater and stormwater infrastructure fund could enhance local economic development and create jobs, states the RCCAO. For every billion dollars invested in water infrastructure, construction can create up to 11,500 direct jobs and 47,000 indirect jobs.

“Ontario’s population is expected to grow by more than 30% by 2041 which will strain infrastructure and have the potential to result in system failures,” says Todorova. “When infrastructure is unable to cope, it can cost billions of dollars in property and environmental damage and significantly disrupt people’s lives. We need a clear path forward that plans for replacement of these essential infrastructure systems,” she adds.