

# Water Quality Study Could be Inexpensive

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by Paul Jankowski

A relatively inexpensive study would indicate whether South Bruce Peninsula needs to look further at building a sanitary sewer system in Sauble Beach, a committee was told Monday.

The laboratory costs for testing 40 samples of beach and groundwater - samples from 10 sites twice in the spring and twice in the summer - would be about \$7,640, Garry Palmateer told a meeting of the Sauble water and sewer report ad hoc committee.

The only other costs would be for collecting the samples, which Palmateer said could be done by students or municipal staff he could easily train, and transporting the samples to the lab.

"I think if you did this pollution survey you would be on solid ground" in determining the impact septic systems are having on groundwater and the beach at Sauble, he said.

Palmateer, an environmental microbiologist and independent consultant, said if the pollution survey showed no indications of contamination the municipality need not go further.

If there are indications of pollution, the municipality has a number of options to determine if it is from wildlife, livestock or human sources. The option he suggested would be reasonable for the municipality and would cost the town \$13,880 for the lab work, he said.

Where the water samples for the pollution survey would be taken would be up to the town, Palmateer said. He told the committee there are engineering firms they could hire but "beware the price tag when you go to consultants."

Marilyn Bowman, one of two South Bruce Peninsula council members who sit on the committee, said she didn't think the municipality should have to hire a consultant.

"We've got enough maps available to us with where the population is and where there are septic tanks that we can pick high zones, we can pick a test site.

The terms of reference for the ad hoc committee are:

- To determine if there is a scientific and/or medical need for human waste management (at Sauble) based on pollution and the associated risks.
- To define the future scope, if any, of the project including capacity for existing septic tank haulers.
- To identify solutions which will resolve the pollution problem.
- To determine if the current human waste management situation and proposed solutions are sustainable.