



Ottawa RIVERKEEPER®  
SENTINELLE Outaouais



## THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR RIVER RURAL GUIDE

A no-nonsense guide to 'doing your part' for the health and future of the Ottawa River, brought to you by Ottawa Riverkeeper.

[www.ottawariverkeeper.ca](http://www.ottawariverkeeper.ca)

*Defending the Ottawa River, Protecting our Communities.*

# 10 TAKE ACTION TODAY: THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR YOUR RIVER – RURAL GUIDE

The Ottawa River is the lifeblood of our community. It provides drinking water, supports a range of species and ecosystems, sustains economic activity, is a world-class destination for recreation, and is an important piece of our history and culture.

*Protecting the health of our river is in the best interest of all people, and all communities!*

## 1

### Be “Well” Aware.

Be careful where you store toxic substances as they can infiltrate soil and contaminate your well water. Test your well water annually.

## 2

### Go Natural.

Maintain a healthy buffer of trees, bushes and plants beside all rivers, streams and lakes on your property. This filters out excess nutrients and contaminants and reduces erosion.

## 3

### Waste Management.

Proper disposal of pharmaceuticals, batteries, paints and hazardous waste prevents unsafe run-off to water. Keeping livestock and pet waste away from surface water and wells is also important.

## 4

### Conserve.

Using less water reduces the burden on our rivers and groundwater reservoirs, conserves energy and supports future generations.

## 5

### Educate. Inspire. Act.

Learn about your river and how it benefits your community then teach and encourage others to become advocates for the river. Collective actions make a difference!

## DID YOU KNOW?

The most polluted water is observed in the lower 150 kilometres of the river from Ottawa/Gatineau to the confluence with the St. Lawrence River.

6

### **Maintain Your Septic System.**

Properly built and maintained septic systems prevent bacterial contamination and nutrient loading of nearby lakes and rivers.

7

### **Eliminate Toxic Substances.**

Chemicals found in pesticides, fertilizers, personal care, and cleaning products eventually find their way back to your groundwater and the river. Avoid pesticides and choose non-toxic, phosphate-free cleaning products.

8

### **Eat Organic, Locally Grown Food.**

Pesticides, fertilizers and livestock waste are a serious threats to well and surface water and must be managed carefully.

9

### **Maintain Vehicles and Equipment.**

Proper car, boat and farm equipment maintenance prevents oil and fluid leaks which run-off into the river or infiltrate to groundwater.

10

### **Use Your River.**

Swim. Drink. Fish. Know your rights. Using your river sends the message that it's worth protecting. When we stop using the river it stops being protected.

Learn more by visiting: [www.ottawariverkeeper.ca](http://www.ottawariverkeeper.ca)

## About Ottawa Riverkeeper

*Ottawa Riverkeeper* is a citizen-based action group that brings people together to protect and promote the ecological health and diversity of the Ottawa River and its tributaries. Expert and independent, our organization advocates for responsible decision-making, public education, participation, access to information, and compliance with protective regulations, for the benefit of our river and our communities. <http://www.ottawariverkeeper.ca>

*Ottawa Riverkeeper* is licensed member of *Waterkeeper Alliance*, an international grass roots advocacy organization, founded by Robert F. Kennedy Jr. <http://www.waterkeeper.org>

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**THE RIVER IS CALLING...**  
**... IT'S FOR YOU.**