



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 into rivers and streams. 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 km of the river, from Ottawa-Gatineau to the river's mouth at Lac des Deux Montagnes.

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 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 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 an independent voice for the Ottawa River, providing leadership and inspiration to protect, promote and improve the watershed's ecological health and future.

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

*Ottawa Riverkeeper* is a registered Canadian charity and a licensed member of *Waterkeeper Alliance*, an international grass roots advocacy organization, founded by Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

[www.waterkeeper.org](http://www.waterkeeper.org)

## Supporters

Ontario  
Trillium  
Foundation



Fondation  
Trillium  
de l'Ontario

The design was provided by

character  
CREATIVE



*Ottawa RIVERKEEPER®*  
*SENTINELLE Outaouais*

301-1960 Scott Street, Ottawa, ON K1Z 8L8

(613) 321-1120 | 1-888-9KEEPER

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

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

Paper: Rolland Enviro100 - 100% post consumer fibre, FSC recycled, ecologo  
and Processed Chlorine Free certified, manufactured in Canada using Biogas energy