



Snowmobiling Activities inside a Protected Public Water Supply Area

A water supply area or watershed is an area of land bounded by topographic features that captures precipitation and filters, stores and drains water to a common outlet such as a lake, stream or ocean.

What is a Protected Public Water Supply Area?

A Protected Public Water Supply Area (PPWSA) is a protected area under Section 39 of the Water Resources Act and is a source of public drinking water for a community.

What types of activities are not permitted in a PPWSA?

It is unlawful to release any material that may impair drinking water quality within the PPWSA including:

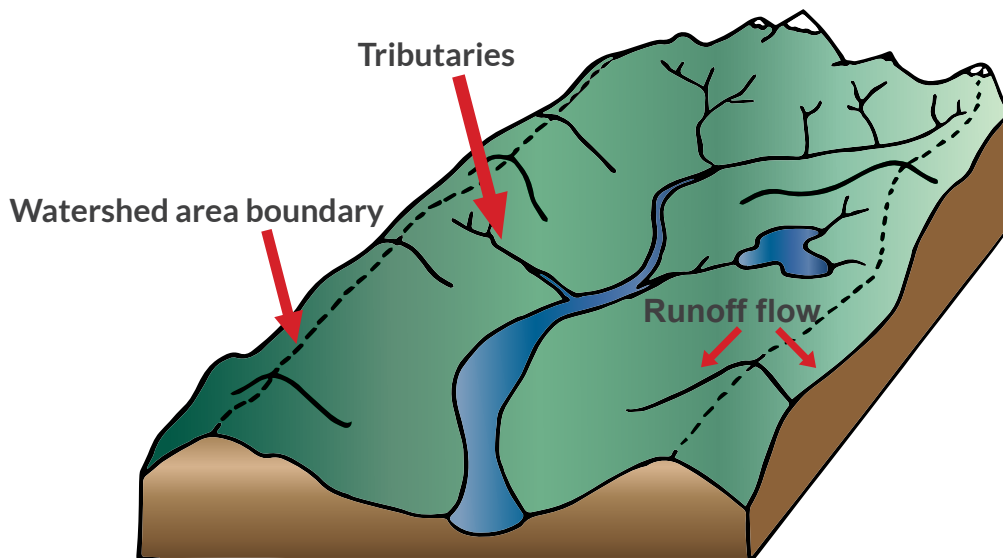
- Petroleum products
- Toxic chemicals
- Garbage/ litter
- Septic waste

It is also unlawful to:

- Use a snowmobile to cross a frozen intake pond
- Develop a snowmobile trail or install a culvert or bridge without a permit
- Ice fish in intake ponds
- Refuel within 150 metres of a body of water

No activities are permitted within the following buffer zones around water bodies:

Intake pond or lake	150 m
River intake	150 m for 1 km upstream and 100 m downstream
Main river channel	75 m
Major tributaries, lakes or ponds	50 m
Other water bodies	30 m



How can snowmobiling affect the environment in a watershed?

Two-stroke engines common to snowmobiles discharge 30 per cent of their fuel mixture, unburnt directly into the atmosphere. Airborne emissions from snowmobiles can be deposited back in the watershed through precipitation and can include: nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, ozone, particulate matter, aldehydes, 1,3 butadiene, benzenes, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons. Trace amounts of acidic and toxic compounds from snowmobile exhaust can accumulate in the snow. When spring arrives and the snow melts, these compounds can enter surrounding waterbodies. Four-stroke engines are preferred as they have minimum harmful emissions. If a snowmobile is lost through the ice, or if gasoline is spilled while refueling on iced covered ponds, one litre of gasoline can contaminate 1,000,000 litres of water. Any accidental fuel spills must be cleaned up immediately and the appropriate town officials notified.

Who suffers when water quality is impaired in a PPWSA?

Public health is a concern when a water supply becomes contaminated. The entire community may be placed on a boil water advisory or non-consumption order. Extensive water treatment processes or development of an additional water source may be necessary at great cost to the community and province. In addition, it is an offence to contravene the Water Resources Act.

How do I know if I am in a PPWSA?

Warning signs are posted along access routes informing the public they are in a protected public water supply area. Try to avoid snowmobiling in a PPWSA, especially in the vicinity of the intake pond. Care should be taken not to damage the environment and to stay on designated trails.

You can view PPWSAs in the NL Water Resources Portal: <https://maps.gov.nl.ca/water/>

Let's work together to safeguard our water supplies.

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