



## 2012 RBC Canadian Water Attitudes Study Fact Sheet

### **With the exception of Albertans, Canadians believe water to be the most important natural resource**

- 49 per cent of Canadians believe freshwater is the country's most important natural resource, with the exception of Albertans where oil ranked first (51 per cent)
- Drinking water supply is considered a high-priority area for government funding, ranked in top three with hospitals (59 per cent), drinking water supply (33 per cent) and schools (33 per cent)
- 81 per cent of the population feels confident that their regions have enough fresh water to meet long-term needs

### **Canadians believe their local water infrastructure is in good condition and don't realize the need for investment**

- Canadians' level of confidence in the safety and quality of the country's drinking water has increased significantly over the past four years to 88 per cent in 2012, up from 81 per cent in 2009
- 37 per cent of Canadians who use municipal water are "not very aware" of the condition of the water and sewage infrastructure serving their home
- More than 80 per cent feel there is no need for immediate investment in their community's infrastructure for drinking water/wastewater facilities as they believe it to be in good condition
- Reports have shown there is an \$88-billion investment required to repair and build new water infrastructure in communities across Canada where systems are up to 80 years old

### **Canadians who live off municipal water supply aren't willing to pay for infrastructure upgrades**

- More than three-quarters of respondents of the study (78 per cent) stated their main source of water comes from the municipal water supply
- 68 per cent felt that their municipalities were doing a good job at maintaining current water and sewage systems to prevent breakages in the short term
- 61 per cent were less impressed with the municipalities' work on upgrading these systems for the long term
- Only 22 per cent would be willing to pay through a water bill or taxes into an infrastructure fund to upgrade drinking water/wastewater facilities in their community

### **Leaving water running when washing dishes and brushing teeth are most common ways we take water for granted**

- Water conservation is important to Canadians, but the population still takes it for granted by:
  - Leaving the water running in the kitchen when washing and rinsing dishes (44 per cent)
  - Leaving water running while brushing their teeth (42 per cent)
  - Allowing soapy water to run down a storm drain (18 per cent)
  - Flushing things down the toilet that should be disposed of in another manner (14 per cent)
  - Hosing down their driveways (12 per cent)

### **Closed beaches are the most common water-related inconvenience**

- Half of Canadians (54 per cent) have been inconvenienced by a water-related issue in the past two years, including:
  - Closed beaches due to poor water quality (19 per cent)
  - Water bans/restrictions (17 per cent)
  - Backed-up drains (13 per cent)
  - Broken pipes outside or near home (13 per cent)
  - Boil-water warnings (11 per cent)

### **The RBC Blue Water Project is an innovative, wide-ranging, 10-year, global commitment to help protect the world's most precious natural resource – fresh water.**

- Since 2007, RBC has pledged over \$32 million to more than 450 not-for-profit organizations worldwide that protect watersheds or ensure access to clean drinking water.