



WATERSHED PROGRAM
SWIFT CURRENT

Time: 10 Minutes

Materials:

- Watershed Quiz
- Quiz Answer Sheet
- Swift Creek Drainage Map
- Saskatchewan River Basin
- Fact Sheet
- Why is Water so Important Sheet
- Do's and Don'ts around the House Sheet
- PowerPoint Projector
- Screen

Introduction: (2 minutes)

Begin by using the Watershed Quiz to find out what the current knowledge level is. Show of hands will be good enough. Have students count the number of correct responses using their fingers. Then let them know where they stand on the knowledge scale provided at the bottom of the Quiz Answer Sheet.

Photo or PowerPoint Slide: (6 minutes)

Show map of the Swift Creek Drainage (Slide 1) and how Swift Current Creek water flows into the Saskatchewan River Basin drainage basin (Slide 2) finds its way to the Hudson Bay. Show the next slide (Slide 3) and discuss some of the animals who inhabit the rivers and the activities which take place. Include the fact that many communities get their drinking water from the rivers.

Ask the students why is it important to be mindful of the health of the stream here in Swift Current and area? Use the Did You Know Fact Sheet to give the students an idea of how water is used in Canada. Then briefly using the Why is Water so Important Sheet, share the salient information so the students get a better understanding of the importance.

Ask the students what we as individual people and household do to ensure water conservation and quality is protected for other users and ourselves? Have students raise their hands for answers and explain them in more detail if needed.

Place the Become Water Wise Sheet on the projector and work your way through these points.

Conclusion: (2 minutes)

Review the main points of the presentation.

- Where does our water go once it leaves Swift Current?
- Why is water conservation and quality important to everyone?
- What are five ways in which we can conserve or improve water quality for us and other users?
- Place the Saskatchewan River Basin on the projector as a final reminder of where the water finally ends up and all those down stream who also depend on the Swift Current stream.

✓ *Check It Out!*

Test yourself—how good is your water knowledge?
Put a check mark beside the correct answer.

1. A watershed is
 - a. what a dog makes when it jumps out of the water
 - b. an area of land that drains water into a river or lake
 - c. a building covering a well

2. Watering your lawn very often
 - a. is good for the environment because your grass stays really green and grows fast
 - b. doesn't affect the natural water cycle because it comes out of a tap
 - c. is not a wise use of water

3. Water conservation involves
 - a. building dams to keep water from going downstream
 - b. reducing unnecessary water use
 - c. storing jugs of drinking water in case the water supply gets contaminated

4. A Canadian uses an average of how many litres of water each day?
 - a. more than 50 litres
 - b. more than 120 litres
 - c. more than 320 litres

5. Sewage Treatment plants, like the new one Swift Current built last year, filters and improves the quality of the water from:
 - a) The creek
 - b) Toilets and Sinks
 - c) Storm Sewers

6. The water that goes through the storm sewers in the city after a rain or when we sprinkle our lawns:
 - a) Goes into the lagoon
 - b) Goes to the sewage treatment plant to be cleaned
 - c) Goes straight into the creek

7. The dam that controls the flow of water through the City of Swift Current is called:
 - a) Duncairn Dam
 - b) Gardiner Dam
 - c) Swift Current Creek Dam

8. The water in the Swift Current Creek comes from:
 - a) Medicine Hat
 - b) Cypress Hills
 - c) Waldeck

9. What we put into the creek in Swift Current affects the city of Saskatoon?
True or False??

10. The Swift Current Creek flows from the north to the south through the city?
True or False??

Source: Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin: Water Watchdog Program

How Did You Score?

1. A watershed is
 - a. what a dog makes when it jumps out of the water
 - b. **an area of land that drains water into a river or lake**
 - c. a building covering a well

2. Watering your lawn very often
 - a. is good for the environment because your grass stays really green and grows fast
 - b. doesn't affect the natural water cycle because it comes out of a tap
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3. Water conservation involves
 - a. building dams to keep water from going downstream
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4. A Canadian uses an average of how many litres of water each day?
 - a. more than 50 litres
 - b. more than 120 litres
 - c. **more than 320 litres**

5. Sewage Treatment plants, like the new one Swift Current built last year, filters and improves the quality of the water from:
 - a) The creek
 - b) Toilets and Sinks
 - c) Storm Sewers

A: b) Sewage treatment plants remove waste from water after it is used in our homes and businesses. This improves the quality of the water.

6. The water that goes through the storm sewers in the city after a rain or when we sprinkle our lawns:
 - a) Goes into the lagoon
 - b) Goes to the sewage treatment plant to be cleaned
 - c) Goes straight into the creek

A: c) The water that you see running down the street into the storm sewers goes straight into the creek. All the contaminants that are on the streets (oil from a car) or on our lawns (chemicals) washes directly into the creek.

7. The dam that controls the flow of water through the City of Swift Current is called:
 - d) Duncairn Dam
 - e) Gardiner Dam
 - f) Swift Current Creek Dam

A: a) Duncairn dam was built in 1943 to control the flow of water for irrigation as well as to supply the City of Swift Current with continuous supply of water.

8. The water in the Swift Current Creek comes from:

- d) Medicine Hat
- e) Cypress Hills
- f) Waldeck

A: b) The headwaters of the Swift Current Creek are in the Cypress Hills. It would be impossible for the creek to begin in Waldeck because the creek would be flowing in the wrong direction.

9. What we put into the creek in Swift Current affects the city of Saskatoon?
True or False??

A: True. We are all a part of a bigger watershed so what we do in Swift Current affects Saskatoon and what happens to the river in Saskatoon affects the water in Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba. We are all a part of a bigger watershed.

10. The Swift Current Creek flows from the north to the south through the city?
True or False??

A: False the creek runs from the south to the north all the way through the watershed.

How Did You Score?

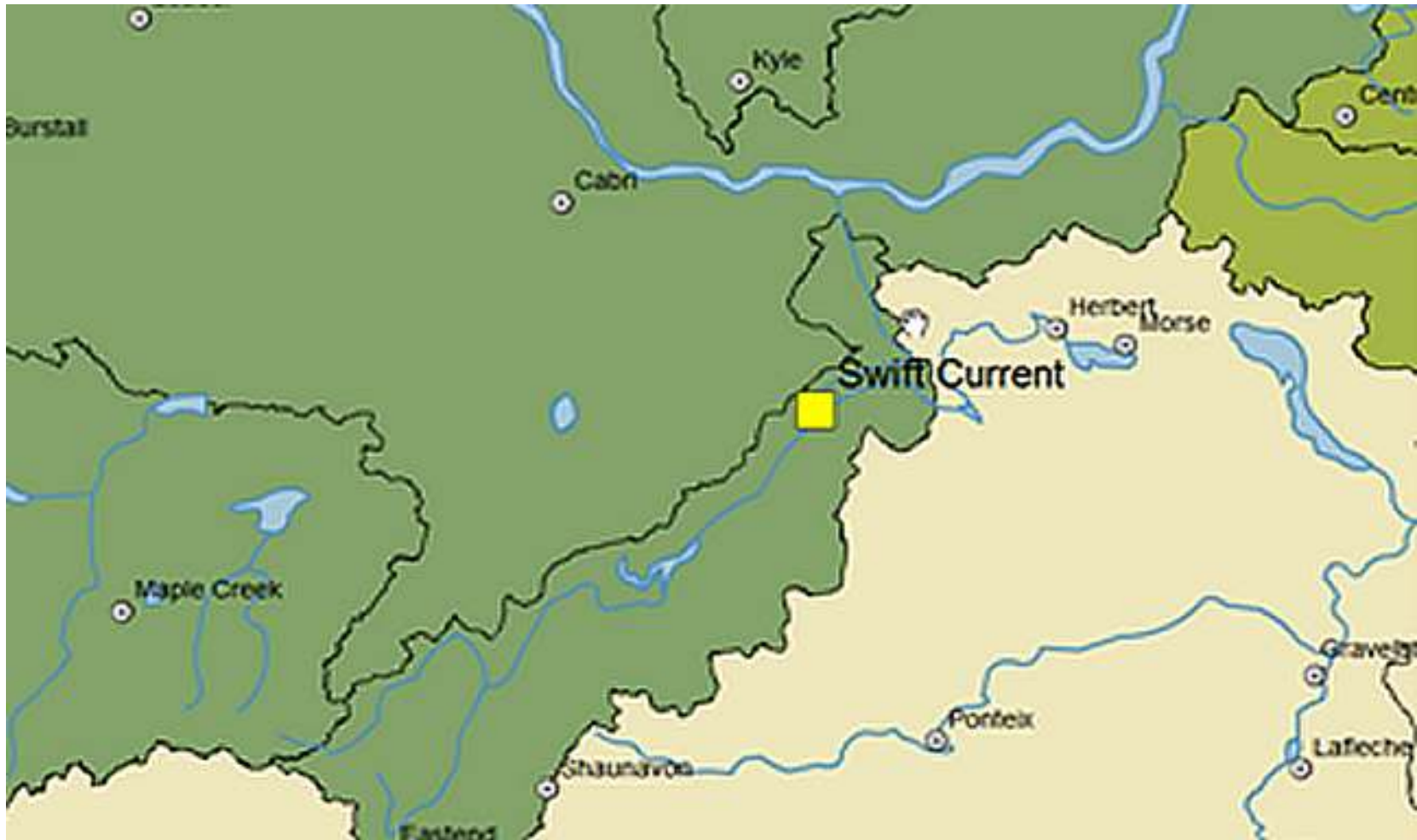
0 – 4 Don't be discouraged! We will be talking more about water in the next few minutes.

5 - 7 You are well on your way to becoming a Water Watchdog!

8 - 10 Congratulations! Your water knowledge is awesome.

Source: Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin: Water Watchdog Program

Swift Current Creek Drainage



Source: Saskatchewan Watersheds (SWA) – Interactive Map



Source: Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin

Why is water so important?



Did you know that you are mostly water? Two-thirds of your body is made up of water. You probably drink 6 -8 cups of water, milk, fruit juice, or soda each day. Animals and plants are almost all water too. So we don't just use water.... we **are** water.

3/4 of the earth is covered with water, and although most of it can't be used by people, plants or animals, water makes life on earth possible. You depend on water for drinking, cleaning, growing and processing food, growing cotton for cloth, swimming, fishing, boating, cooking, cleaning, putting out fires and generating electricity through hydropower dams. Try to think of one item or action that doesn't involve water in some way!

Water also connects us to the rest of that natural world - plant and animal communities depend on water in many of the same ways: for food, water and shelter. Since every drop is used again and again, water is the ultimate in recycling. It is important to protect this precious resource because we share it with all other living things, past, present, and future.

Unfortunately, people have not always used water wisely. We've over-used it to carry away our waste. We've put hazardous materials in or on the ground where they seep into ground water. We've often used more water than we need. Yet we can improve our water resource by conserving water

at home, cleaning waste from industries and cities before it returns to rivers or lakes, and preventing pollutants from homes and farms from washing into waterways with the rain. Some communities have already begun to help!

One of the ways we can have a big effect on improving our water quality now is protecting it from future pollution by changing the small ways that people affect water. What you do in your community, or in your house, yard, road, park, business, school, farm or ranch can conserve water and improve its quality. You've already started to make a difference by becoming a Water Watchdog! Keep going to learn more about water and what you can do to help it!!

Source: Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin

DID YOU KNOW??

A Canadian uses an average of 326 litres of water each day for household and gardening purposes.

Of the world's total freshwater supply, over 2/3 is found underground!

Once evaporated, a water molecule spends about 10 days in the air.

Less than 3% of the water produced at a large municipal water treatment plant is used for drinking purposes!

Residential indoor water use in Canada is as follows: toilet - 30%; bathing and showering - 35%; laundry - 20%; drinking and cooking - 10%; cleaning - 5%

1,000 kg of water is required to grow 1 kg of potatoes!

Each day humans must replace 2.4 litres of water, some through drinking and the rest taken by the body from the foods eaten.

A 5 minute shower with a standard shower head uses 100 litres of water.

A 5 minute shower with a low-flow shower head uses 35 litres of water.

About 83% of our blood is water. It helps digest our food, take in oxygen, transport body wastes, and control body temperature.

One litre of oil can contaminate up to 2 million litres of water.

Source: Partners FOR the Saskatchewan River Basin

Become Water Wise!

Household Chemicals:

- Be aware that many chemicals commonly used around the home are toxic. Select less toxic alternatives. Use non-toxic substitutes wherever possible.
- Take unwanted household chemicals to hazardous waste collection centers; do not pour them down the drain. Pouring chemicals down the drain may disrupt your septic system or else contaminate treatment plant sludge.
- Never pour unwanted chemicals on the ground. Soil cannot purify most chemicals, and they may eventually contaminate runoff.
- Use low-phosphate or phosphate-free detergents.
- Use water-based products whenever possible.
- Leftover household pesticide? Do not indiscriminately spray pesticides, either indoors or outdoors, where a pest problem has not been identified. Dispose of excess pesticides at hazardous waste collection centers.



Landscaping and Gardening:

- When landscaping your yard, select plants that have low requirements for water, fertilizers, and pesticides.
- Cultivate plants that discourage pests. Minimize grassed areas which require high maintenance.
- Preserve existing trees, and plant trees and shrubs

to help prevent erosion and promote infiltration of water into the soil.

- Use landscaping techniques such as grass swales (low areas in the lawn) or porous walkways to increase infiltration and decrease runoff.



Other landscaping tips:

- Leave lawn clippings on your lawn so that nutrients in the clippings are recycled and less yard waste goes to landfills.
- Compost your yard trimmings. Compost is a valuable soil conditioner which gradually releases nutrients to your lawn and garden. (Using compost will also decrease the amount of fertilizer you need to apply.) In addition, compost retains moisture in the soil and thus helps you conserve water.
- Keep storm gutters and drains clean of leaves and yard trimmings. (Decomposing vegetative matter leaches nutrients and can clog storm systems and result in flooding.)

Water Conservation:

- Use low-flow faucets, shower heads, reduced-flow toilet flushing equipment, and water saving appliances such as dish and clothes washers.
- Repair leaking faucets, toilets, and pumps.
- Use dishwashers and clothes washers only when fully loaded.
- Take short showers instead of baths and avoid letting faucets run unnecessarily.
- Wash your car only when necessary; use a bucket to save water. Alternatively, go to a commercial carwash that uses water

efficiently and disposes of runoff properly.

- Do not over-water your lawn or garden. Over-watering may increase leaching of fertilizers to ground water.
- When your lawn or garden needs watering, use slow-watering techniques such as trickle irrigation or soaker hoses. (Such devices reduce runoff and are 20-percent more effective than sprinklers.)



Community Action:

- Participate in clean-up activities in your neighbourhood.
- Write or call your elected representatives to inform them about your concerns and encourage legislation to protect water resources.
- Promote environmental education. Help educate people in your community about ways in which they can help protect water quality.



Prairie Pointers!

- Visit your parks (TCYP)
- Remember to dispose of waste properly (SWA)
- Animals and plants must be left in their homes (NS)
- Investigate more about native prairie (AAFC-PFRA)
- Report an Owl! 1 800 HOOT (SBOIC)
- I cut my pop holders (DUC)
- Eat Canadian beef (PCAP)
- Stick to the trails (SBOIC)