

For Immediate Release  
Thursday, November 15th

**Review of Nuclear Waste Law Required  
National Alliance Calls for Major Changes in Decade Old Nuclear Fuel Waste Act**

Toronto – On the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a controversial law coming into force that could permit the burial of highly radioactive nuclear waste, a broad alliance of over thirty health, environmental, community and faith groups has issued an open letter to communities being studied as possible burial sites and is calling on the federal minister of Natural Resources to review the *Nuclear Fuel Waste Act* and to direct the Nuclear Waste Management Organization to be more open and accountable.

Nuclear Waste Watch, a network of 31 organizations from across five provinces, released a letter to federal Minister of Natural Resources Joe Oliver today, outlining concerns about the way the Nuclear Waste Management Organization is conducting itself as it carries out a search for a community willing to become the burial site for more than 50,000 tonnes of highly radioactive waste generated by nuclear power plants in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick. Over 90% of the waste is at reactors in Ontario.

In an open letter to communities being studied as possible burial sites, the signatories to Nuclear Waste Watch's eleven-point position statement said they "share concerns about the long term safety of placing the nuclear waste in caverns deep underground" as well as concerns about the risks associated with transporting radioactive wastes long distances and through communities along the way.

"Communities being studied as burial sites should know that they are not alone", said Brennain Lloyd, Project Coordinator with Northwatch, a regional coalition in northern Ontario, where 12 communities are being studied as possible burial sites. "There are organizations and experts across Canada who have been tracking this issue for decades and can provide support in evaluating what the nuclear industry is telling them."

"The Nuclear Waste Management Organization is engaged in a massive public relations program to convey the impression that the nuclear waste problem is solved when it is not", commented Dr. Gordon Edwards, president of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility.

Canada is one of several countries who have been studying the concept of burying nuclear waste for several decades. No country has yet constructed and begun operating an underground repository for the high level waste generated through the use of nuclear power.

Nuclear Waste Watch has launched a new web site at [www.NuclearWasteWatch.net](http://www.NuclearWasteWatch.net) where they have posted the list of endorsing organizations and their letter to the Minister of Natural Resources and open letter to communities being studied as possible burial sites.

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## Additional Quotes:

"The Seaborn panel recommended unanimously that a nuclear waste agency should be formed that is independent of the nuclear industry and accountable directly to the parliament of Canada. The industry-owned NWMO is neither. As a result, Canadians are being manipulated by an agency that has an inherent conflict of interest. The government and parliament have abdicated their responsibilities to the citizens that elected them."

Dr. Gordon Edwards, Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility, tel. 514 489 5118 / 839 7214

"Greater Sudbury sits at the intersection of several major transportation routes," says Steve May, member of Nuclear Free Sudbury. "As such, Sudburians can expect high level nuclear waste to be travelling through our community one day in the near future, either by road or by rail. The risks associated with transporting radioactive waste from spent fuel bundles are unknown. Before it selects a site for long-term storage, the NWMO needs to engage communities along transport routes, like Sudbury, because Sudburians need to be a part of a larger conversation."

Steve May, Nuclear Free Sudbury, tel. 705-688-8641

"Canada's nuclear industry is desperate to relieve itself in a hole in some unsuspecting community. Once it does, NWMO will be selling the hole to nuclear waste peddlers from around the globe."

Dave Taylor, Concerned Citizens Committee of Manitoba, [ccc@web.ca](mailto:ccc@web.ca), 204-284-4400

"A great truth is awakening in this land: the nuclear industry is irresponsibly, unnecessarily and irreversibly poisoning our planet, and our governments are not protecting us. A clean environment is a right, not a privilege. We the people will no longer stand by and witness this destruction. We are speaking out and taking action for the sake of future generations."

Committee for Future Generations, Beauval, SK [committeeforfuturegenerations@gmail.com](mailto:committeeforfuturegenerations@gmail.com)

"Many communities in the north are being lured with promises of jobs and 'high tech' industry. Many of those same communities have been hit with closures of mills and other industries. This is a significant environmental justice issue when economic 'advantages' are dangled without an appropriate process for communities to assess all of the risks and with a faulty decision making process as set up by this legislation."

Theresa McClenaghan, Senior Counsel, Canadian Environmental Law Association, tel. 416 960 2284

## Additional Information:

[Nuclear Waste Watch Position Statement \(2012\)](#)

[Nuclear Waste Watch members \(2012\)](#)

[Letter to the Hon. Joe Oliver, Minister of Natural Resources, 15 November 2012](#)

[Open Letter to Communities Under Investigation for Nuclear Waste Burial](#)