



CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL LAW ASSOCIATION
MEDIA RELEASE

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June 9, 2000

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Citizen's Group in Walkerton Seek to Intervene in Public Inquiry

Concerned Walkerton Citizens (CWC), a new, broadly-based group of residents of Walkerton have asked the Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA) to help them submit recommendations for the terms of reference for the Public Inquiry into the E. coli outbreak in that town. It is expected that the Ontario government will announce the terms of reference for the inquiry today, June 9, 2000.

Concerned Walkerton Citizens believe that their full participation is vital to restore the confidence of all Ontarians in the safety of Ontario's drinking water supply. Therefore CWC have asked the Attorney General for Ontario, Hon. J. Flaherty, that the group have input into the terms of reference for the Public Inquiry. To that end, CELA forwarded the following suggested terms of reference to the Attorney General:

What factors led to the public health E. coli disaster suffered by the community of Walkerton?

What was the source of the E. coli outbreak?

Were responsibilities and duties clear and if not, what role did they play in the disaster?

What were the Legislative or approval gaps that can be identified from this disaster?

Were testing requirements adequate?

Was staffing an issue?

Are our water guidelines adequate to protect human health?

What role did provincial cut-backs and changing roles play in the disaster?

Were contingency and emergency preparedness plans sufficient?

What role did legislative or regulatory changes play in the disaster?

Was enforcement of laws adequate?

What improvements to laws, regulations, policies and programs are required to ensure that there is no repeat of the disaster in Walkerton or elsewhere in Ontario?

Concerned Walkerton Citizens are asking that the inquiry be held in the Walkerton area and that intervenor funding be provided to participants.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Concerned Walkerton Citizens:

Bruce Davidson, 519-881-3688, Todd Huntley, 519-881-0456

Canadian Environmental Law Association:

Paul Muldoon or Theresa McClenaghan, Counsel, 416-960-2284.

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