

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**SEPTEMBER 7, 2004**

## **FOCUSING ON CRITERIA FOR CLEANING UP HISTORIC LOW-LEVEL RADIOACTIVE WASTE**

PORT HOPE, ONTARIO – Development of criteria to guide the clean-up process will be the focus of discussion for the Port Hope Area Initiative this fall. Criteria for the clean-up of contaminated sites will ensure the long-term protection of the environment and the health and safety of the people of Port Hope and Clarington.

“Everyone involved in the Port Hope Area Initiative agrees that the clean-up must be done right, once and for all,” said Glenn Case, Director of the Port Hope Area Initiative. “Our discussions this summer with municipal representatives have resulted in a number of principles that set the policy direction for the development of clean-up criteria. Now, we will consult informed members of the public and gather comments from regulators, peer reviewers and other stakeholders before finalizing clean-up criteria.”

These draft principles outline our joint commitment to:

- Clean up each property so that it can be used for all current and foreseeable uses. That means there will be no limitations on:
  - Our children digging and playing in the dirt of a cleaned up site,
  - Eating vegetables grown in the soil of a cleaned up site,
  - Building houses or digging swimming pools on cleaned up sites,
  - Playing in fields, hiking, biking or other recreational use of the sites;
- Fully honour the intent of the legal agreement between the federal government and the municipalities;
- Consult with the public and other stakeholders to finalize the criteria for submission to the regulator;
- Consider all pathways for contaminants to reach people and valued components of the environment; and
- Meet or exceed regulatory requirements.

Some sites are more challenging than others and special circumstances apply to locations such as the Port Hope inner harbour, non-radioactive industrial-waste contaminated sites identified in the legal agreement, the site of the existing waste management facility at Port Granby and those sites with predictable future uses such as the Port Hope landfill and certain roadways in Port Hope.

A draft discussion document on clean-up criteria has been presented to technical agencies and the municipal peer reviewers and circulated for their comments by September 22, 2004. Tonight the draft discussion document is being circulated to Port Hope Council and will go to Clarington Council on September 13, 2004.

The Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office (LLRWMO) will now invite informed citizens who have indicated an interest in clean-up criteria to discuss the principles and clean-up criteria at sessions in October. Information sessions for the general public will be offered in November and final comments are expected from the municipalities in December. In January the clean-up criteria will be submitted for regulatory approval.

NEXT STEPS

At Open Houses in December, studies assessing the effects of the project on the environment will be presented to the public. These studies deal with the terrestrial, aquatic, atmospheric, groundwater, geological, social, and economic environments as well as human health and safety considerations.

Everything will come together in the draft Environmental Assessment Study Reports in early 2005, to be showcased to the public at Expo '05. After all comments are considered, these final study reports for both the Port Hope and Port Granby Projects will be submitted to the federal authorities responsible for the project – Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

Detailed engineering and licensing of the facility will follow. Construction and cleanup work are anticipated to begin in 2007.

Copies of reports and studies are available at the Port Hope and Clarington public libraries and at the Project Information Exchange at 110 Walton Street in Port Hope. From 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday visitors can drop-in, discuss their views and pick up information on the Port Hope Area Initiative.

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**For further information:**

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