



# news release

Ministry  
of the  
Environment

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Elizabeth Janz (416) 440-3479  
Environmental Assessment Branch

Gerry Merchant (416) 323-4333  
Public Affairs and  
Communications Services Branch

## **NEW AJAX WATER SUPPLY PLANT TO PROCEED ON THE BASIS OF CLASS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

Environment Minister Ruth Grier today announced she has decided not to require an individual environmental assessment of the proposed water supply plant in Ajax. The decision is subject to a series of conditions drawn from the Environmental Assessment Advisory Committee's (EAAC) report to the minister.

"I have taken steps to ensure that the community has the protection it needs without unduly delaying completion of a much-improved and needed area water supply," Mrs. Grier said. "I appreciate the concern area residents have about the potential effects of nuclear plant discharges on their drinking water and I have considered their comments very carefully."

In her decision, the minister considered requests from the public that the project be bumped-up to an individual environmental assessment. The major concerns expressed dealt with the plant's location on the waterfront and with potential tritium levels in water from the plant as a result of its proximity to the Pickering Nuclear Generating Station.

After the community's bump-up request was received by the Minister, she asked EAAC to advise her on whether the project should be subject to a full environmental assessment. The advisory committee recommended against the bump-up if a series of

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conditions could be met by the region. They also advised that the province undertake a full review of Ontario's standards for tritium.

Mrs. Grier decided to address public concerns about tritium by referring Ontario's standards for tritium to the Advisory Committee on Environmental Standards (ACES) for public review. The development of the water plant will be allowed to proceed while this review is under way.

In addition, Mrs. Grier said staff of the ministry's Environmental Assessment Branch will be consulting Ontario Hydro, the Atomic Energy Board and the ministries of health, environment and energy on a recommendation by EAAC to establish a Durham Nuclear Health Committee.

Mrs. Grier agreed with EAAC that the Regional Municipality of Durham's planning process was adequate and that most of the environmental concerns can be addressed through appropriate terms and conditions. She set 21 conditions to which the region must agree before construction on the new plant can proceed.