



Ministry of the Environment
Ministère de l'Environnement

February 18, 1988

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Steve Salbach, (416) 424-3000
Central Region

Deo Persaud, (416) 323-4926
Water Resources Branch

Carol Bailey, (416) 323-4340
Communications Branch

ENVIRONMENT MINISTRY STUDY SHOWS
LESLIE STREET SPIT LAKEFILL IS CONTAMINATED

Environment Minister Jim Bradley has called for steps to be taken to reduce contaminant levels in lakefill delivered daily to the Leslie Street Spit.

The first of three consultant's studies released today by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment shows that a significant percentage of fill delivered to the spit in March 1987 exceeded provincial contaminant guidelines for lakefill.

The second study found high levels of contaminants in core samples taken from lakefill deposited during 1963 to 1986.

The third report examines policy options to improve the quality of lakefilling activities in Ontario.

"We are concerned about the results", says Jim Bradley. He further stated, "We are disappointed with the poor showing of the Lakefill Quality Assurance Program. The program as originally developed six years ago is outdated, and is not effective in stopping contaminated fill from being taken to the Spit. We will work with the construction industry, other government agencies and members of the public to develop an effective plan of action. In addition, we will develop a comprehensive province-wide strategy for lakefill projects".

At the spit, sixty-seven per cent of all the incoming fill sampled on March 19 and 25, 1987, exceeded the ministry's Lakefill Quality Guidelines for one or more contaminants. Twenty of the 98 samples taken exceeded the lead guideline of 50 parts per million (ppm), six exceeded the PCB guideline (0.05 ppm) and five samples exceeded the guideline for mercury (0.3 ppm).

Fifty-two of 54 core samples, taken from fill deposited between 1963 and 1986, exceeded the lakefill guidelines for one or more contaminants. Thirty-five samples exceeded the lead guideline, 16 exceeded the PCB guideline and seven samples exceeded the mercury guideline.

Environment Ontario has also been conducting studies to assess the impact of lakefilling on water and sediment quality. While these studies have found that Metro Toronto drinking water is not affected by lakefill from the Leslie Street Spit, elevated concentrations of some contaminants have been found in the surrounding bottom sediments.

Copies of the reports, Quality of Fill Deposited at Leslie Street Spit, 1963 to 1986, Fill Quality Currently Received at the Leslie Street Spit, and An Evaluation of Lakefilling Activities in Ontario, Final Report and the executive summary of the final report, are available from the Central Region Office (416) 424-3000 and from the Water Resources Branch (416) 323-4926 of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. ←