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For immediate release

Ontario ranked as fifth-largest air polluter in North America

Six Ontario companies ranked in the top 50 polluters in North America

The North American Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) report "Taking Stock - North American Pollutant Releases and Transfers 1998" released today concluded:

- Ontario is ranked 5th among all provinces and states for total air releases (40,173,251 kg). The top four releasers to air are Ohio, Texas, Tennessee, and Pennsylvania.
- Ontario ranks 9th in transfers for further management in North America (including further management by energy recovery, treatment or sewage treatment plants).
- Ontario is ranked 5th among all provinces and states for total releases and transfers. The top three are Ohio, Texas, and Michigan
- Ontario is ranked 12th among all provinces and states for total on-site releases (45,927,400 kg). The top three releasers are Ohio, Texas, and Pennsylvania.
- Ontario's total generation of pollutants was down 7%, with on-site releases down 18%, and total off-site releases up 23% since 1995.
- Ontario ranks 3rd in transfers to recycling (75,087,309 kg) behind Ohio and Indiana. (This is the first time that the *Taking Stock* report has examined transfers to recycling.)

The annual report tracks the sources and handling of industrial pollutants in North America in each province and state and is broken down by individual company. Using data from Canada's National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI) and the US Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) the report tracks the on- and off-site transfer and release of 165 toxic substances.

Anne Mitchell, Executive Director of the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy (CIELAP) stated, "This report shows that Ontario, while improving in the total generation of pollutants and on site releases, certainly could do better in the areas of air releases and off-site releases."

(more...)

"This years report raises some real concerns about what happens to waste that is being transferred off-site. We know that some of this material is being recycled, but we don't know how the remainder is being disposed of," stated Mitchell. "Obviously more work needs to be done to properly track these pollutants."

Other findings in the report include:

- In Ontario, 820 facilities reported to the NPRI. Six Ontario companies made the list of the top 50 polluters (on-and-off site releases) in North America:
 1. Philip Enterprises Inc., Hamilton (#15)
 2. Co-Steel Lasco, Whitby (#25)
 3. Philip Enterprises Inc., Parkdale Ave. Facility, Hamilton (#26)
 4. Dofasco Inc., Hamilton (#27)
 5. Ontario Power Generation Inc., Nanticoke (#40)
 6. Inco Limited, Copper Cliff (#46)

- In 1998, Ontario had two facilities in the top 50 list of Facilities Reporting with the Largest Total Releases of Known or Suspected Carcinogens. These were:

#16 Inco Limited, Copper Cliff Smelter Complex, Copper Cliff
#48 Dominion Castings, Ltd. NACO Inc. Hamilton

Over the years these reports are becoming more comprehensive. "This report is particularly encouraging in that power generating facilities, a major pollution source (contributing 7% of all Canadian releases and transfers reported) have been added as well as transfers to recycling. This allows us to have a better handle on the total pollution being released, said Mitchell".

Ms. Mitchell concluded, "This report allows the public to learn what hazardous materials are being produced and released into their local environment and helps to hold individual companies and governments accountable for the dangerous materials produced."

*For more information about local sources of industrial pollutants or individual companies go to:
www.pollutionwatch.org*

*To read the full Taking Stock report or to search the data, visit the CEC website at
www.cec.org/takingstock/*

For more information contact:

Anne Mitchell
Executive Director
(416)-923-3529 ext 24
info@cielap.org

The Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy has for been commenting on and monitoring policy and regulatory changes related to the environment for 30 years.