



Mayor Mel K. Norton  
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December 3, 2014

Dear Mayor Norton,

The Council of Canadians has learned through media that last week, you spoke with New Brunswick Energy Minister Donald Arseneault about the possibility of disposing fracking wastewater through the Saint John water system. This plan poses a threat to communities in Saint John, along the St. John River and the Bay of Fundy and we urge you to reconsider.

Governments and the scientific community currently lack the analytical capabilities to detect all the chemical components in fracking wastewater, and do not have a solid scientific understanding of the fate and toxicity of many of them. The Council of Canadian Academies' recent report, *Environmental Impacts of Shale Gas Extraction in Canada*, clearly outlined the lack of information on many key issues including fracking chemicals.

We do not wish for Saint John or other Bay of Fundy coastal communities to become a testing ground for the long-term implications of what might be considered treated fracking waste.

The problem of fracking wastewater is a critical reason that communities around the world are calling for a ban on fracking. We commend the New Brunswick government for committing to a moratorium on fracking.

Research by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Endocrine Disruption Exchange Inc. has demonstrated that fracking fluids contain toxic substances known to cause serious health impacts such as cancer and organ damage, and have negative impacts on neurological, reproductive and endocrine systems. Under the Chemicals Management Plan (CMP), Environment Canada reviewed chemicals used in the fracking process in both Quebec and the U.S. Approximately half of the fracking chemicals did not meet the CMP criteria for further investigation, meaning these chemicals have not been assessed for potential risks to the public.

Low aqueous concentrations of certain contaminants are a concern because they can bioaccumulate in aquatic biota and biomagnify in aquatic food webs to high concentrations that may pose risks for health of humans as well as marine and terrestrial wildlife.

A 2011 study by the Canadian Rivers Institute warned that the river is already under stress due to the Beechwood dam, the Mactaquac hydro dam and run off from farming and forestry. There have been numerous changes to the species of fish in the river. Atlantic salmon, striped bass and other native species are being threatened by the Mactaquac Dam.

This danger to fish populations in the Bay of Fundy would have dire coastal health and economic implications should contamination occur.

Some examples of treated fracking wastewater exist in Atlantic Canada with Atlantic Industrial Services' Debert facility, which claims to have treated the water so that it meets Canada's drinking water standards. However, Ecojustice's recent report *Waterproof: Standards* found that Canada's standards on testing drinking water quality, continue to be below international benchmarks and are at risk of further falling behind.

Saint John is also on Maliseet traditional territory. The U.N. Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples calls for the free and informed consent of indigenous people "prior to the approval of any project affecting their lands or territories and other resources, particularly in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources." We urge the Saint John Council to obtain free, prior and informed consent of the Maliseet peoples.

Given the lack of understanding of the impacts of fracking chemicals, and a desire we are certain you share to protect water sources, public health and the surrounding ecosystem, we urge Saint John Common Council to oppose any plans to discharge fracking wastewater into the St. John River and Bay of Fundy. Water knows no borders. Your decision in this matter could have dire consequences for communities around the Bay of Fundy and beyond.

Respectfully,



Andrew Graham  
Saint John Chapter member



Angela Giles  
Atlantic Regional Organizer



Emma Lui  
Water Campaigner

- c.c. Deputy Mayor Shelley Rinehart  
Councillor Bill Farren  
Councillor Greg J. Norton  
Councillor Susan Fullerton  
Councillor John MacKenzie  
Councillor Gerry Lowe  
Councillor Donna Reardon  
Councillor David Merrithew  
Councillor Ray Strowbridge  
Councillor Shirley McAlary  
New Brunswick Minister of Environment and Local Government Brian Kenny

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