

**Media Release**  
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## **Sudburians' Health Potentially at Risk: Sudbury Soil Study challenged by nationally known pollution watchdog**

### **New Community Committee urges Ontario government to take responsibility for health of Sudburians.**

A report prepared by nationally known pollution watchdog, Environmental Defence Canada, says that the Sudbury Soil Study Human Health Risk Assessment Report (HHRA) "cannot demonstrate that there is no harm occurring, it can only estimate level of risk. The assessors have inappropriately decided what that acceptable level of risk should be."

The review of the HHRA was commissioned by Mine Mill 598 and Local 6500 of the Steelworkers this summer, and released this morning.

The Environmental Defence report sets out a number of serious findings:

- 1) Lead contamination is above safe levels in Greater Sudbury, and children may be harmed at these levels;
- 2) Air levels of nickel are higher than recommended exposure in three communities;
- 3) There are concerns that inhaled arsenic and specific types of ingested arsenic may put Sudbury residents at risk;
- 4) Higher levels of lead, arsenic and nickel in Sudbury-grown foods are a concern for those eating them;
- 5) The assessment assumes it is acceptable to expose workers to greater level of risks, who receive greater doses of nickel and other contaminants during their employment.

In response to the report, a number of community residents and organizations have banded together to form the Community Committee on the Sudbury Soil Study. The Community Committee is urging the Ontario Ministries of Environment and of Labour to step up and assume their responsibility for the health of Sudburians.

The Committee was represented at today's media event by Rick Grylls, President Local 598, John Fera, President Local 6500 Steelworkers, Monique Beaudoin, Centre de Sante Communautaire, and Brennain Lloyd of Northwatch. Many other Committee members were also present.

“We want to see the Government ensure that the public decides what level of risk it can accept, what will be done to clean-up affected properties, and what will be done to treat those whose health is at risk”, said John Fera. “The process to date has been dominated by the companies who are responsible for the mess.”

Said Brennain Lloyd: “We need the Ontario Government to help the public formulate a response to the Soil Study. The Ecological Risk Assessment has yet to be released, and we don’t want another green-wash. The public needs and deserves real involvement in reviewing these results, and the government needs to be ready to take real action at the end of the process”.

“It is not acceptable to exclude the extra health risks for the 25-35,000 current and past workers in Sudbury,” said Rick Grylls. “The community has to decide the acceptable levels of risk and what should be done to deal with the problems.”

Monique Beaudoin, Health Promoter for the Centre de santé communautaire de Sudbury says, “the francophone community and the community in general have the right to information in their language and to the tools and resources that will allow them to participate effectively in the Ecological Risk Assessment. The environmental health of our community is at risk and the public has a right to be fully informed and to determine the level of risk it is willing to live with”.

Copies of the Environmental Defence Report are available from [www.toxination.ca](http://www.toxination.ca).

Environmental Defence is a national non-profit organization that seeks to connect Canadians with key environmental and pollution issues. Its Toxic Nation campaign undertakes studies and advocacy for change. The HHRA report was reviewed by Dr. Kapil Khatter.

Dr. Khatter is a family physician and an environment and health expert who has led chemical-related policy work at Environmental Defence ([www.environmentaldefence.ca](http://www.environmentaldefence.ca)). He has a Master’s degree in Environmental Studies and has sat on a number of working groups tasked with providing expert advice to Health Canada and Environment Canada. Dr. Khatter is also a board member of Health Care Without Harm and the President of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment.

**For more information, contact:**

Aaron Freeman, Policy Director Environmental Defence 613-564-0007

Rick Grylls, President CAW Local 598 - 705-673-3661

Monique Beaudoin, Health Promoter Centre de santé communautaire de Sudbury - 705-855-8084 ext 211

Brennain Lloyd Northwatch - 705-497-0373