

Media Release

RECENT PROVINCIAL MEDIA ATTENTION CONFIRMS LOCAL HEAVY CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY CONCERN WITH NIAGARA SEWER OVERFLOW INCIDENTS

July 23, 2009

The Heavy Construction Association of Regional Niagara (HCARN) has for the past three years been following and reporting on Niagara's alarming high percentage of overflow incidents compared to the balance of the Province of Ontario. The Association's 2007 updated report is attached.

Recently Ecojustice (formerly Sierra Legal Defense Fund) published a Study entitled "Flushing Out the Truth: Sewage Dumping in Ontario" which reported that approximately 18 billion litres of sewage was dumped from Ontario sewage treatment plant bypasses in 2006. The following year, 15 billion litres were discharged, with at least eight municipalities releasing more than a billion during that time period, according to Ontario Ministry of Environment estimates cited by Ecojustice. "In order to mitigate these impacts and adapt to climate change, immediate investment in sewage infrastructure is needed to improve treatment and increase the capacity of Ontario's sewage systems and decrease the frequency and volume of CSO (combined sewer overflows) and bypass events," the report says.

According to Ontario Spills Action Centre's 2007 sewage bypass reports, Niagara Falls at 7.0 billion litres of untreated or undertreated sewage was the highest releasing municipality in Ontario with Welland at 3.9 billion litres checking in with the fifth highest total in the province

On July 21st the Daily Commercial News published an article that presented the Ecojustice findings along with another recent report commissioned by The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) that looked at incorporating sustainability in infrastructure and the energy costs of deferred maintenance in municipal water systems. Both studies shared a similar conclusion among its varied recommendations that being the creation of a "Green Infrastructure Fund" that would provide directed funding to the reduction of sewage overflows by upgrading existing sewer systems.

HCARN president Brad Brewster has stated that **"this is a critical environmental and health issue in the Niagara Region that needs immediate attention by all levels of government"**

HCARN includes 57 Niagara based heavy construction firms and related service firms that provide road construction, reconstruction and sewer/water main construction services. In 1999, the Association commissioned a report entitled **"The Case for Increased Infrastructure Investment in the Region of Niagara"**. This report highlighted the immediate need for investment in road infrastructure and in sewer and water main construction, and was presented to The Regional Public Works Committee and various Municipal Councils. The study has served as the catalyst for many further investigations and public awareness campaigns regarding infrastructure issues.

HCARN is taking the initiative to keep people informed of what's happening in Niagara regarding the state of infrastructure.

If you would like further information about HCARN and its initiatives, please contact Brad Brewster, President of HCARN at (905) 227-2719 or visit our website at <http://www.hcarn.com>