

**ACCESS TO ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION
DECISIONS MADE BY THE BOARD OF HEALTH
June 19, 2006**

The Board of Health:

- (1) adopted the staff recommendations in the Recommendations Section of the report (June 5, 2006) from the Medical Officer of Health, with the following amendments:**
 - (a) staff recommendation (1) being amended by adding the following recommendation (1) (c):**

“(1)(c) that a Community-Right-To-Know (CRTK) pilot project be undertaken at a City facility, with the following parameters:

 - (i) select a facility that uses ‘priority’ toxic substances;**
 - (ii) track toxic substance use and discharge through a ‘materials account balance’ method;**
 - (iii) develop and implement a pollution prevention plan; and**
 - (iv) report tracking and pollution prevention plans and activities to the public;”;** and
 - (b) staff recommendation (2)(a) being deleted and replaced with the following recommendation instead:**

“(2)(a) consult with stakeholders in the business community, labour groups, environmental and health organizations and community groups to identify information needs, barriers and opportunities for enhanced access to environmental information, as well as addressing the potential next steps identified in the report entitled ‘Access to Environmental Information: Preventing Pollution, Avoiding Risks’;
- (2) endorsed the following principles to guide the City’s development of a Community Right To Know (CRTK) strategy, which strategy will:**
 - (a) provide consistent and timely information on toxic chemicals used, stored and released in Toronto by location and facility;**
 - (b) encourage and support economically and environmentally sustainable business practices through pollution prevention planning and toxic use reduction activities;**
 - (c) focus on toxic chemicals that contribute to one or more of the following:**

- (i) occupational and environmental cancer;
 - (ii) poor air quality in Toronto;
 - (iii) damaging children's health; and
 - (iv) prevalence of Persistent Organic Pollutants in our environment;
 - (d) generate information disclosure from facilities that are highly likely to use and/or release toxic chemicals based on the above criteria and are located where people live; and
 - (e) ensure an efficient, effective system for reporting and retrieving information such as a searchable web-based database;
- (3) supported and requested the Medical Officer of Health to work with other City staff to expand the City's online "Environmental Portal" to include the following information in a searchable format:
 - (a) sewer-use by-law and pesticide by-law non-compliance/infraction incidences;
 - (b) notices and information on Environmental Assessments underway in Toronto;
 - (c) applications and decisions on provincial Certificates of Approval to discharge to air or other environmental mediums in Toronto; and
 - (c) formal City submissions to other levels of government regarding environmental instruments and policy (e.g. waste oil comment and nuclear energy comment).
- (4) requested the Medical Officer of Health to:
 - (a) provide an update at the Board of Health meeting on September 13, 2006, and at its first meeting in 2007, on the following points outlined in the communication (June 19, 2006) from the Toronto Environmental Alliance:
 - (i) the status of the quick start recommendations;
 - (ii) further measures which can be undertaken resulting from the Community Right To Know (CRTK) pilot project; and
 - (ii) the principles to guide the City's development of a CRTK strategy; and

- (b) **report to the Board of Health meeting on February 2007, on the following:**
- (i) **investigate a process and opportunities to make the pollution prevention plans and their results under the sewer-use by-law publicly available; and**
 - (ii) **explore options for enhanced reporting on pesticide products applied on outdoor properties in the City;**
 - (iii) **outline ways and means to ensure that any Right To Know program be self-financing to the greatest extent possible; and**
 - (iv) **address the issues raised in the communications filed with the Board of Health and by those persons who addressed the Board of Health at its meeting on June 19, 2006.**

Report (June 5, 2006) from the Medical Officer of Health, reporting on a review of access to environmental information in Toronto, and propose a mechanism for additional consultation and future implementation of strategies to increase municipal and public access to such information.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- (1) the Medical Officer of Health, in collaboration with the Executive Environment Team:
 - (a) identify what environmental information currently held by the City could be shared within the corporation and what could be made available to the public, and develop and implement plans to make this information more available and accessible; and
 - (b) report to the Board of Health early in 2007 on progress in making environmental information currently held by the City more accessible within the corporation and to the public;
- (2) the Medical Officer of Health, in collaboration with the Executive Environment Team:
 - (a) consult with stakeholders in the business community, labour groups, environmental and health organizations and community groups to identify information needs, barriers and opportunities for enhanced access to environmental information;

- (b) report to the Board of Health early in 2007 on the results of the stakeholder consultation and with recommendations for future action;
- (3) the appropriate City officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.