

For media inquiries please contact:  
Duet Public Relations  
Jennifer Love | T: 416-271-5477  
E: jennifer@duetpublicrelations.com

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

## **Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation & Parks issues Director's Order to Picton Terminals**



**TORONTO: July 23, 2019** – Concerned citizen's group Save Picton Bay has combed through a recent Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation & Parks (MECP) Director's Order issued to shipping business Picton Terminals that showcases the challenges MECP has faced eliminating salt pollution leeching into Picton Bay caused by Picton Terminals.

On June 20, 2019, Picton Terminals received a Director's Order from Ontario Ministry of Environment, Conservation & Parks, which supersedes the multiple Provincial Officer Orders issued previously. The Order states "I am issuing this Order to formally set out the Ministry's requirements, as the previous voluntary and mandatory abatement approach has not been successful."

The Order (available upon request) provides a timeline of actions. In particular, the Ministry was surprised by a shipment of Egyptian Salt "as Picton Terminals had previously advised the Ministry there would be no salt stored on site until the fall of 2019, at which point it would be offloaded into the Dry Covered Structure."

Picton Terminals went on to advise the Ministry that, contrary to previous commitments contained by their approved Interim Action Plan, they were now unsure whether the Dry Covered Structure would be completed by the fall. Picton Terminals proposed storing salt in the structure using tarps instead of the approved covered roof.

The Order stipulated that no more salt was to be stored on site until the Dry Storage Structure was completed, however drone footage and photos obtained by Save Picton Bay seem to show otherwise. The attached drone photo taken by Save Picton Bay shows a salt stain leading from the pile into the dry storage construction site despite Picton Terminal's assurances that this small load of salt could be managed to prevent any contact with the natural environment.

Citizen's group Save Picton Bay is particularly worried as ongoing monitoring of groundwater in test wells at the site indicate that polluted water continues to enter Picton Bay. In its appeal, Picton Terminals claimed

that this pollution was not a problem as surface water testing did not find elevated levels of pollutants. The Ministry soundly rejected this position.

Referring to an earlier affidavit, the exfiltration zone is only 30 metres from Picton Bay, and the ongoing groundwater monitoring data shows that the downgradient monitoring wells are highly impacted by sodium, chloride, cyanide, and iron, all constituents of road salt.

The Order states that in the opinion of Robert Putzlocher, District Engineer, MECP the groundwater quality in these wells would represent the quality of water that is discharging to the Bay.

Recorded totals from water samples taken in 2018 revealed shocking concentrations of chlorides ranging from 37.1 mg/L to 48,500 mg/L, and 5,630 mg/L to 16,600 mg/L, respectively. The Canadian Water Quality Guideline for the Protection of Aquatic Life is 120 mg/L.

Similarly, in 2018 cyanide (free) concentrations ranged from 0.374 mg/L to 26.2 mg/L, and 0.034 mg/L to 0.371 mg/L, respectively. The Provincial Water Quality Objective for cyanide (free) is 0.005 mg/L.

These contaminate concentration levels prompted MECP to conclude that the concentration of contaminants being discharged into the Natural Environment are greater than known guidelines that are protective of aquatic life and therefore are at a level that may impair surface waters. To directly quote the Director's Order:

"The Ministry's concern is the continued and ongoing discharge of contaminants to the Natural Environment. As noted by the memos from Officer Putzlocher and Castro, they both have concerns regarding the elevated levels of contaminants in the discharge to the Natural Environment resulting from the activities at the Site and it is these continued and ongoing discharges that the Ministry is seeking to have reduced."

In the Fall of 2019, Save Picton Bay notified MECP about an airborne spill of suspected Clinker dust from Picton Terminals which blew over a neighbour's house and property. Lab analysis has now confirmed this dust contains calcium carbonate and is likely related. This issue is now under further investigation to see if charges will be laid similar to the Petcoke spill of several years ago which Picton Terminals plead guilty to in court.

#### About Save Picton Bay

Save Picton Bay is a not-for-profit group made up of ordinary citizens from all walks of life, whose concerns is solely water quality for County drinking, recreation, tourism and commerce. Save Picton Bay's objective is to ensure the safety and well-being of the environment and citizens of Prince Edward County.

For more information please visit: [savepictonbay.ca](http://savepictonbay.ca)

Available for interviews:

David Mackay, Save Picton Bay member

Victor Lind, Save Picton Bay member

Eric Gillespie, lawyer representing Save Picton Bay