

POLLUTIONWATCH

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Sarnia Area Facilities Rank High in Ontario's Top 10 List of Respiratory Polluters - List compiled by PollutionWatch released today

Sarnia, Ontario - Three Sarnia area companies rank in the Top 10 facilities in Ontario for releasing air pollutants linked to respiratory illnesses, such as asthma and bronchitis. Ontario Power Generation's Lambton facility is at #3, Imperial Oil's Sarnia Refinery plant makes the list at #5, while Shell Canada Limited's Sarnia Manufacturing Centre ranks #8.

A **Top 10 Ontario Respiratory Polluters** list was released today by Environmental Defence and the Canadian Environmental Law Association. The groups developed the list from their web site, **www.PollutionWatch.org**, which uses the most recent finalized federal government data to rank facilities reporting releases and transfers of pollutants across Canada. The Top 10 list is based on 2002 data provided by industries to the federal government's National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI).

"This list shows that coal power plants, chemical manufacturing and petroleum refining are responsible for much of the poor air quality across this province, and industries in Sarnia are significant contributors," said Dr. Rick Smith, Executive Director, Environmental Defence.

The three Sarnia area facilities together contribute more than 16% of the over 605 million kilograms of suspected respiratory toxicants released by the Top 10 Ontario facilities.

Top 10 Ontario Facilities Reporting Air Releases of Respiratory Toxicants 2002 (NPRI)

Rank	Companies	Facilities	City	Air Releases of Respiratory Toxicants (kg) (NPRI)
1	Inco Limited	Copper Cliff Smelter Complex	Copper Cliff	243,097,522
2	Ontario Power Generation	Nanticoke Generating Station	Haldimand	144,122,635
3	Ontario Power Generation	Lambton Generating Station	Courtright	52,878,144
4	Falconbridge Limited	Smelter Complex	Falconbridge	42,720,942
5	Imperial Oil	Sarnia Refinery Plant	Sarnia	30,732,325
6	Stelco Inc.	Stelco Hamilton	Hamilton	26,005,065
7	Ontario Power Generation	Lakeview GS	Mississauga	22,078,858
8	Shell Canada Limited	Sarnia Manufacturing Centre	Corunna	15,737,839
9	Imperial Oil	Nanticoke Refinery	Haldimand	15,277,175
10	St. Marys Cement	Bowmanville	Bowmanville	13,281,723

* These pollutants are suspected respiratory toxicants; the list is derived from www.scorecard.org

In addition to air pollution linked to smog and asthma, facilities in Sarnia are releasing other pollutants to the air that may affect children's health and the environment, including lead, mercury, benzene and nickel. Some, like lead and mercury, can be harmful to

children's development. Others, like nickel and benzene, are associated with cancer.

"Many of these toxic substances polluting our air pose a serious threat, particularly to children, young people, pregnant women and the elderly," said Dr. James Brophy, Executive Director, Occupational Health Clinic for Ontario Workers/Sarnia. "The community will require the active involvement of the provincial and federal governments to force the reduction of pollutants and ensure the protection of public health."

2002 was the first year that facilities had to report their releases of air pollutants known to cause smog, acid rain and respiratory illnesses. The Sarnia facilities in the **Top 10 Ontario Respiratory Polluters** list reported releases of sulphur dioxide (associated with acid rain and a respiratory irritant), oxides of nitrogen and Particulate Matter (associated with smog, respiratory and cardiovascular illnesses), and carbon monoxide (harmful to children's development and linked to respiratory illnesses). Many of these chemicals are classified as toxic under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*.

"The Aamjiwnaang First Nation is exposed on a daily basis from all sides to chemical emissions from surrounding industry. We are very concerned about the air pollution list released today which includes three area facilities near our community," said Darren Henry, chair of the Aamjiwnaang First Nation Environmental Committee.

The PollutionWatch partners are calling on the Sarnia-based industries and the Ontario and federal governments to focus more attention on measures to prevent pollution, in keeping with a key requirement of Canada's national Pollution Prevention Strategy and the national environmental law the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act*. "While industry has invested in improving technology to reduce emissions to the environment, more resources and commitment are needed to promote cleaner technology, including a shift from end of pipe controls to looking at the source of the pollution," said Smith.

The groups are also recommending that governments put strong environmental laws in place to address sources of pollution with an effective enforcement component to ensure accountability. One step in the right direction is the Ontario government's Bill 133, which aims to levy penalties against companies that allow spills into the environment.

"The data shows that there's still work to be done. By reducing pollution, facilities will help the environment, the community and the economic bottom line," said Paul Muldoon, Executive Director, Canadian Environmental Law Association. "Both federal and provincial governments will have to work harder to prevent pollution. The federal law, CEPA, needs more teeth to implement pollution prevention. And while Bill 133 is a great first step in Ontario, the province needs a clear strategy for pollution prevention."

About PollutionWatch (www.PollutionWatch.org) is a collaborative project of Environmental Defence and the Canadian Environmental Law Association. The web site tracks pollution across Canada based on data collected by Environment Canada through the National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI). NPRI does not include pollution data from all chemicals or sources. Visitors to the PollutionWatch web site can identify polluters in their home towns by searching by postal code, access "quick lists" of the largest polluters in the country, get pollution trends from 1995-2002, or create their own ranked lists of polluters by province, industrial sector, or corporation.

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