



Friends of the Earth  
Les Ami(e)s de la Terre

### **For Immediate Release**

## Grandfather calls on feds to investigate PCB contamination

(Ottawa, ON/New Harbour, NL - June 2, 2009) – Yesterday, Mr. Allan Williams of New Harbour, NL, with the support of Friends of the Earth, applied to federal Environment Minister Jim Prentice to investigate violations of the federal PCB regulation under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* by the government of Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as others. Mr. Williams submitted evidence of contamination in excess of regulated limits of PCBs at a New Harbour landfill site. PCBs are persistent organic pollutants controlled globally and the subject of a new Canadian regulation that seeks to eliminate releases to the environment by 90% in five years and 100% of stored PCBs by December 2009.

“New Harbour is a beautiful town with lots of lakes and ponds in the area,” says Allan Williams. “That the provincial government would act so shamefully to dump waste contaminated with PCBs at our landfill, deny the dumping entirely and then take no action to prevent PCBs from entering the surrounding environment is unacceptable. I want someone to be held responsible for this mess and clean it up so that my grandchildren can safely swim in the local lakes and ponds.”

Mr. Williams alleges that transformer casings, which have been dumped at the landfill site over the past 23 years, are leaching PCBs into the surrounding soil and water in concentrations that violate the federal regulations passed in September 2008. Mr. Williams is hopeful that the new *PCB Regulations* and his application for investigation will force the federal government to step in and do the right thing – order the province to contain the PCBs and clean-up the site.

“For almost a decade, we’ve been trying to get attention on this mess. Now, with Friends of the Earth’s help, we are exercising our environmental rights to call for a federal investigation. We have asked Friends of the Earth to monitor the treatment of our application for investigation to the Minister,” says Mr. Williams.

“This PCB Regulation is an important new opportunity for communities and environmental watchdogs to get long overdue action on stored or dumped PCBs,” says Beatrice Olivastri, CEO, Friends of the Earth Canada. “Any Canadian resident can apply for an investigation of an offence under *CEPA 1999*. Friends of the Earth hopes to hear from other concerned people about toxic messes that need to be cleaned up in their communities.”

*CEPA 1999* allows any individual of at least 18 years of age, who is a resident of Canada, to request an investigation of an alleged offence under the Act or Regulations. The Minister of Environment is then required to investigate the alleged offence and report to the applicant every 90 days on the progress of the investigation and on what action the Minister has taken or plans to take.

**For information, contact:**

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*Friends of the Earth Canada is a voice for the environment, working nationally and internationally to inspire the renewal of communities and the earth through research, education and advocacy. It is the Canadian member of the 69 country strong Friends of the Earth International ([www.foecanada.org](http://www.foecanada.org)).*