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For Immediate Release

MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT REJECTS RICHMOND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT Science Doesn't Support Landfill Expansion

TORONTO – The Ontario government has rejected an environmental assessment submitted by Waste Management of Canada for their proposed expansion of the Richmond landfill site near Napanee, it was announced today.

“I have determined after careful review that it is in the best interest of public health and the environment to reject this EA proposal,” Environment Minister Laurel Broten said. “The science is clear: this assessment failed to demonstrate that the community’s water would be protected.”

In a technical review of the environmental assessment rendered June 9, government scientists and technical experts recommended that approval be denied. It said: “Given that the landfill is a potential source of groundwater contamination in a susceptible subsurface environment, the Review has also concluded that there are significant environmental risks associated with expanding the landfill.”

The Richmond landfill site is located on a highly complex subsurface environment where area residents use groundwater as a source of drinking water and is therefore vulnerable to contamination. The review found that the EA failed to provide sufficient information to determine whether or not the project could proceed without having serious environmental impacts. The review also found that the EA did not:

- meet regulatory requirements for protecting ground water used for drinking water
- provide for a viable leachate control option that would protect water
- adequately describe groundwater baseline conditions
- offer a sound plan to mitigate air emissions

“Protecting the environment is my number one priority,” Broten said. “Environmental assessments have to be based on sound science and they must protect the water Ontarians drink and the air we breathe.”

The decision letter from Minister Broten to Waste Management of Canada can be viewed at <http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/envision/news/2006/110301tr.pdf>

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