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## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

September 3, 2005

The Editor  
The Abbotsford News

Editor:

I would like to respond to a recent editorial.

Ministry staff have been working hard to remove chemicals stored improperly at the former Canadian Petroleum Corporation (CPC) site in Abbotsford. During their work, they discovered several containers of potentially explosive material. While ministry staff were already dealing with a number of potentially dangerous or flammable chemicals, it was the discovery of this highly explosive material that elevated a serious and urgent situation to an environmental emergency.

Since the very beginning, Ministry of Environment staff have tried to compel CPC to operate safely, properly and to clean up the site. Those efforts included inspections, an investigation and 11 charges under the Waste Management Act and a \$10,000 fine, as well as a pollution prevention order.

Unfortunately, CPC still did not clean up the site.

Having exhausted other options under the law, and with hazardous chemicals needing attention, the Ministry moved in to clean up the site last month.

Ultimately, the root cause behind this situation is a business that operated outside the law and put the public at risk. The clean up of this site is not the end of the issue. A new investigation is under way and we fully intend to recoup as many of the costs associated with this clean up as possible. I will also be looking at new policies to reduce the chance of something similar happening again.

Sincerely,

Barry Penner  
Minister of Environment