
LETTER TO THE EDITOR

July 27, 2005

The Editor
Nanaimo News Bulletin

Editor:

After reading your July 23 article on potential soil contamination in downtown Nanaimo (Unearthed oil tanks probed for hazardous waste), I want to explain the procedures my Ministry has in place to ensure contaminated sites are cleaned up by property owners.

When a land owner discovers or suspects contamination at a site, they are encouraged to hire an approved environmental professional to help with investigation, remediation and certification steps. Many consultants are approved by the Ministry after examinations and a review of their experience. I understand the City of Nanaimo has hired an approved environmental consultant to manage this project.

After changes in regulations introduced by this government in 2003, we have focused Ministry resources on cleaning up high-risk sites and we're giving owners of lower risk sites the flexibility they need to get them cleaned up quickly and efficiently. Our rules encourage land owners to find the method that works best, as long as they eliminate the risk to the environment and human health.

Ministry staff take their responsibility for monitoring the remediation of contaminated sites seriously and are working hard to protect all British Columbians.

Sincerely,

Barry Penner
Minister of Environment