

My name is Anne Ehrlich and I live at 331 Pinehurst Road; northwest of the Paris Pit site where we have lived since 1995. Our farm is in the Well Head Protection Areas for the Gilbert and Telfer well fields. I am a mother, wife and neighbour who was shocked by the proposed operations for the Paris Pit based on a 40 year license.

I am also a public health professional and have worked as a researcher, university teacher and public health professional whose career has focussed on evidence-based healthy public policies and health systems in Canada and internationally with WHO (World Health Organization).

I am a retired faculty member from McMaster University where I was also cross-appointed in the Public Health Research, Education and Development Programme (PHRED). At the time, the PHRED Programme was an inter-disciplinary, inter-sectoral programme co-funded by the Ministry of Health and Longterm Care to strengthen local, provincial and national capacities for public health practice and evidence-based decision-making.

I was aware of some of the growing evidence of health risks associated with the use of pesticides and herbicides over the last decades but was very open to learning more about how these were being addressed by the industry as they proposed their operations for the Paris Pit.

The Paris Plains is an area where there is relative 'mono-cropping'. In other words, corn crops are mostly rotated with soya beans. The use of atrazine over the period of time since the license for the Paris Pit was granted in 1974, is well known.

As our neighbours had talked about breast cancers and very untimely deaths of mothers, wives and daughters, more questions came to mind about what was happening and what we needed to ask and learn

about. I started to look into the growing evidence of the health risks associated with atrazine use, including recent research about breast cancer clusters in South Western Ontario and other evidence from the US about aquifers contaminated with atrazine in the corn-growing states of Illinois, Ohio and surrounding states.

I asked myself and heard others ask, why is atrazine banned in the EU? What did the Paris Appeal in France, 2003 mean for us given the current standards in Canada, the US and elsewhere?

You may know that the Paris Appeal was an international declaration on diseases due to chemical pollution organized through United Nations agencies and signed by over 500 scientists, Nobel laureates, physicians, nurses and other health professionals from around the world (see attached International Declaration on Diseases due to Chemical Pollution, UNESCO, Paris, France)

More recently, the Berlaymont Declaration (2013) built on that Appeal. Confirming the growing evidence of health risks of endocrine disrupting chemicals (EDCs) like atrazine, it calls for stronger regulatory structures and processes that would assess and monitor the risks of exposure - even at low doses. It reinforced the need for precautionary principles.

Signatories included Canadian scientists (see attached copy of The 2013 Berlaymont Declaration on Endocrine Disrupters).

Learning about the risks of chemical pollution added to the concerns we had about the digging of gravel on a wellhead protection area where atrazine has been used for decades. Further, there were more questions about how then would the growing evidence of unpredictable water conditions with climate change, including droughts like we had during 2016, be considered.

How would the risks be assessed to ensure a safe and sustainable water supply for our growing population?

What about the cumulative risks associated with the many other gravel pits along the Galt-Paris moraine along the same watershed, the Grand River?

By whom and how were these being assessed and considered?

Reading the recent Draft Report for the International Joint Commission of the Great Lakes which reinforced the vulnerability of the Grand River Watershed, added to the many questions and concerns we were raising.

Again, we were referring to scientific evidence that supported our call to have a more rigorous assessment of health and environmental risks of the proposed Paris Pit on >600 acres of agricultural land in such close proximity to the Grand River and on this wellhead protection area.

I have been one of the founding members of CCOB which started shortly after the meeting Dufferin called in February of 2012. At that initial meeting, and after the presentations made by Dufferin, I remember very clearly asking about studies and environmental risks assessments. The industry assured us these would be sent to us.

Mayor Ron Eddy who also attended that meeting, - reinforced the need to have these answers. Subsequently he wrote a letter to the MNR in 2012 asking that the license for the Paris Pit be revoked given the concerns raised by CCOB and previous community groups over the 40 years since the license was granted.

CCOB asked for the same and in follow up to the community action that was led by Communities United 20 years earlier. Their questions and concerns were heard and the proposed operations stopped in 1991.

The last five years we've worked tirelessly to ensure we had credible evidence to support our concerns and also asked world renowned researchers to review our evidence.

We disseminated this evidence to our community members and the Brant County Council. The Council agreed that there had to be much stronger site studies to provide the evidence to ensure the health and safety of our community. They made resolutions to support the same which went to the MOECC in 2015.

We have been committed to an information sharing and learning process that has also involved working with local youth who have presented their research and evidence to Brant County Council and helped with Letter Writing Campaigns. These letters were also presented by one of our youth leaders to our MPP, Dave Levac who also sent a letter asking that a more rigorous site specific assessment be conducted before the PTTW and ECA were granted.

From all of these efforts we had hoped to ensure both a transparent, open response by the industry and the regulatory bodies as well as stronger and methodologically sound assessments of environmental and health risks.

The expectation we have of ourselves as community members to be professional in our submissions and presentations was in surprising contrast to our experience with the Ministry.

Research and evidence presented by our community group, despite support from highly respected researchers has often been discredited, misrepresented or omitted from the process.

Examples of these are well documented and include the shocking draft minutes we received following the MOECC Stakeholder Mtg. Feb. 2015 when Dr. Ken Howard's statements were very disrespectfully misrepresented. The corrections and edits sent by all CCOB members never returned. No final revised Minutes were sent to CCOB members who attended.

Another shocking experience was when we delivered >1000 letters from the Community as part of the submissions for the EBR for the ECA in June 2014.

We decided to deliver the letters by hand to ensure that the hard copies would be received and signed for at the MOECC on St. Clair Ave in Toronto. We were shocked to arrive at the address listed on the EBR Registry and found that the office was completely empty. A small note on one of the windows indicated that they had had moved approximately one month earlier. Interestingly, the same incorrect address was still used on the ECA in October which raises many more questions about the offices we put our trust in.

In any case, we did find the new office and spoke to the MOECC's Director who accepted our submissions in person. She received our box of letters and assured us that all risks would be fully addressed. When I asked if they ever worked with Ministry of Health and in particular Public Health, given the health risks that concerned us, she said that was not a part of the process she was familiar with. She, however, assured us that Permits would not be granted if there were health risks.

The experience we've had as we've worked hard to ensure that the strongest evidence possible is used as a basis for making such crucial decisions that will impact our lives and the lives of our children, raise many more questions about the strength and credibility of the evidence used to date and the structures and processes that are in place that allowed it.

We are very grateful that the Environmental Review Tribunal has granted us an appeal on certain conditions for the Permit to Take Water, the Environmental Compliance Approval and an opportunity to make presentations. It gives us hope that these years of hard work will still support healthier evidence-based decisions.