



Public Attitude Research Regarding the Port Hope Area Initiative

Port Granby Project

Wave 4

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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Municipalities of Port Hope and Clarington each have a legal agreement with the federal government for the cleanup and safe long-term management of historic low-level radioactive waste, some of which is currently located at the Port Granby Waste Management Facility located in the south-eastern corner of Clarington on the shores of Lake Ontario, just east of the hamlet of Port Granby. The proposed cleanup includes engineering and environmental assessment studies, public consultation, a property value protection program, compensation to municipalities, construction of facilities, and ongoing monitoring. The Port Granby Project is part of the Port Hope Area Initiative and is being conducted on behalf of the federal government by the Low-level Radioactive Waste Management Office.

After twenty months of study and community consultation, the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office has recommended the relocation of the waste to a new modern facility that would be located several hundred meters north of Lakeshore Rd. in the vicinity of the existing site. The proposed site is on farmland currently owned by Cameco. If approved by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, the new facility would take about 5 years to construct. The wastes would be fully encapsulated within an above ground mound using state-of-the-art cover, liner and monitoring systems. Once completed, this mound would be landscaped.

As part of the Port Hope Area Initiative, the Low Level Radioactive Waste Management Office (LLRWMO) has commissioned periodic public attitude research to monitor public awareness of the PHAI, identify issues and concerns, determine communications needs of the public, and provide data regarding public attitudes and behaviours. This report presents the October 2005 findings of a fourth wave (W4) of telephone surveying carried out among the general public who live in the postal code areas that receive the Port Granby Project communications. The first wave (W1) was undertaken among area residents in February 2002, the second in April 2003, and the third in May 2004.

When interpreting the research findings, it should be noted that the survey area covered the entire Ward 4 in Clarington, whereas only a small southern portion of Ward 4 is directly affected by the cleanup in this municipality. By contrast, a much larger percentage of the population will be affected by the cleanup in the Municipality of Port Hope.

Key findings from the 2005 survey include:

- Overall, almost half of respondents claim to know at least something about the presence of low-level radioactive waste (44%) in their community. Nevertheless, living in a community with radioactive waste management facilities is not something people dwell upon. Over eight-in-ten respondents (84%) either 'never' or 'not very often' think about this fact. (Tables 4.1 and 4.2)
- Four-in-ten respondents are aware of the Port Granby Waste Management Facility (47%), the Port Hope Area Initiative (41%), or the

Port Granby Project (40%). Few respondents, however, are aware of Project details:

- Only two-in-ten (22%) are familiar with the various studies carried out over the past three years to determine the most appropriate ways to clean up the low-level radioactive waste in Port Granby.
- Twelve percent (12%) have heard of the Property Value Protection program. Seventy-seven percent (77%) believe that the program "completely" or "somewhat" protects residents against losses in property value. The ways in which residents are not protected include: it doesn't fully cover the property value (12%) and a lack of awareness of the program (10%). (Tables 4.3-1, 4.3-2, 4.3-5, 4.3-6)
- Low awareness levels are indicative of the finding that 38% are familiar with the Port Granby Project newsletter, and of these people 20% "always" and 35% "sometimes" read it. This despite the fact that 13 newsletters have been mailed to households in the survey area over the past four years. (Tables 6.1-3, 6.1-4)
- Similar to previous years, 37% of the respondents provide a "very good" or "good" assessment of the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office's job at addressing questions about its activities, and 21% have no questions. Respondents who are able to assess the various studies are split in their satisfaction with accessibility of the information (48% satisfied, 52% dissatisfied) and the manner in which they were able to provide input (49% and 52%), and two-thirds believe that community input was fully (16%) or partially (48%) considered in the conclusions . (Tables 6.1-1, 4.3-3, 4.3-4)
- Yet more respondents now than in the past state that:
 - They have received information from brochures / newsletters mailed to them (37% up from 15% in 2002), and
 - LLRWMO staff is the most accurate and complete source of information (12% up from 6%). Independent qualified scientists (24%) continue to be the top mention. (Tables 6.1-1, 6.1-2, 6.2-1)
- Brochures / newsletters mailed to them continue to be the preferred sources of information about the Port Granby Initiative, (mentioned by 55%). (Table 6.2-1)
- Regardless of awareness levels of the Port Granby Project, radioactive waste is not an issue that is seen to negatively affect the community. Only 4% of the respondents name it as a top issue, 3% volunteer it as an issue that negatively affects the community's image, and 1% volunteers it as the community characteristic they like the least. Moreover, 65% are at least "somewhat" confident that the waste can be safely managed at the recommended facility for the long term. (Tables 3.2, 3.3-2, 3.3-3, 5-1)
- Satisfaction with living in the community is high, with 71% expressing the highest level of satisfaction, "very satisfied". (Table 3.1)

2 INTRODUCTION

The Municipalities of Port Hope and Clarington each have a legal agreement with the federal government to complete the cleanup and safe long-term management of historic low-level radioactive waste, slightly contaminated soils and, in the case of Port Hope, some industrial wastes. The proposed projects include engineering and environmental assessment studies, public consultation, a property value protection program, compensation to municipalities, construction of facilities, and ongoing monitoring. The Port Granby Project is part of the Port Hope Area Initiative and is being conducted on behalf of the federal government by the Low-level Radioactive Waste Management Office.

As part of the Port Hope Area Initiative, the Low Level Radioactive Waste Management Office (LLRWMO) has commissioned periodic public attitude research to monitor public awareness of the PHAI, identify issues and concerns, determine communications needs of the public, and provide data regarding public attitudes and behaviours to be used as part of the socio-economic impact assessment of the projects. Prior to this fourth wave (W4) of surveying commencing, Port Hope and Ward 4 Clarington residents had been sent a Newsletter outlining the recommendation to relocate the Port Hope and Port Granby waste to two facilities, one in each community, and there had been coverage of the recommendation in the local media. In the case of Port Granby, after twenty months of study and community consultation, the Low-Level Radioactive Waste Management Office has recommended the relocation of the waste to a new modern facility that would be located several hundred meters north of Lakeshore Rd. in the vicinity of the existing site. The proposed site is on farmland currently owned by Cameco.

Two separate reports of the survey results were prepared, one for the Port Hope Project and one for the Port Granby Project (Clarington), which together comprise the Port Hope Area Initiative (PHAI). This report presents the findings of the fourth wave telephone survey carried out during October 2005 among the general public in the areas that receive Port Granby Project communications. The first wave was undertaken among area residents in February 2002 (W1), the second in April 2003 (W2), and the third in May 2004 (W3).

The primary objectives of the current wave of research were to:

- Identify area residents' attitudes towards and perceptions of their community including: major issues facing their community, things or issues that most negatively affect the image of the community, and what they like most and least about their community;
- Identify levels of knowledge about the presence of low-level radioactive waste in their community;
- Assess levels of familiarity with, and attitudes about the various PHAI programs and the Port Granby Project studies and findings;

- Gauge people's confidence in the ability of the PHAI to safely manage the waste at a location specifically designed for that purpose over the long-term;
- Determine the main concerns people have with the PHAI and the actions that can be taken to make them more confident about the safety of the facility;
- Identify awareness and assessments of the Property Value Protection Program;
- Gauge the success of the LLRWMO in addressing questions people have about its activities;
- Examine communications needs including the most accurate, complete and preferred sources of information, and determine familiarity with the Port Granby Project Newsletter; and
- Identify changes in knowledge, attitudes and information needs regarding low-level radioactive waste and the PHAI over the past four years.

A questionnaire was developed for telephone administration that took approximately 15 minutes to administer and contained 30 questions, including 7 open-ended questions. A copy of the questionnaire is included in the Technical Appendix. Only adult residents 18 years of age or older qualified for the survey. The sample was evenly split between men and women.

A total of 252 interviews were conducted from October 15 - 20, 2005 among residents in the area that receives the Port Granby Project communications material¹. A sample of this size yields results that are accurate within $\pm 6.4\%$, 19 out of 20 times. The sample was drawn proportional to the population distribution for the area covered by the Port Granby Project, which approximates the boundaries of Ward 4 Clarington. The Technical Appendix contains the sample details.

Using the independent z-test, the analysis examined the data to determine whether there are differences in the responses provided by the Port Granby sample over time. Two significance levels were used:

- ◆ 95%. Where there are significant differences at the 95% level, these changes in percent are reported as a "significant difference";
- ◆ 90%. This significance level is less stringent than the 95% level and hence the conclusion of a significant difference over time is more prone to error. Percentage changes at this lower level of 90% are noted as "directional".

¹ Please note in the Technical Appendix that the boundaries for the Port Granby Project changed slightly from the previous studies.