

Soil Contaminants

Through the Port Hope Area Initiative (PHAI), Canadian Nuclear Laboratories (CNL) is testing approximately 4,800 properties in Port Hope for four signature contaminants that indicate the presence of historic low-level radioactive waste (LLRW). These are arsenic, uranium, radium-226 and thorium-230.

Once LLRW has been identified on a property, CNL broadens the scope of the testing to include 15 additional contaminants that are sometimes related to the presence of LLRW. These are antimony, barium, beryllium, boron,

cadmium, cobalt, copper, lead, mercury, molybdenum, nickel, selenium, silver, vanadium and zinc. If these contaminants are part of, or mixed with LLRW they will be removed during the PHAI cleanup.

However, at some Port Hope properties these contaminants are associated with other industrial and/or residential sources (e.g., lead-based paint) and are non-LLRW contaminants. Only contaminants mixed with LLRW will be cleaned up as part of the PHAI.

Precautions you can take

While health risk related to historic LLRW being found in Port Hope is considered low there are a number of simple precautions you can take to reduce your exposure.

These measures include:



- Follow basic handwashing practices. In particular, ensure children wash their hands when they come in from playing outside and discourage them from putting their fingers or play things in their mouths.



- Brush pets before letting them indoors to minimize the spread of potentially contaminated dust.



- Provide children with a sandbox containing clean sand in an area away from any contaminated soil.



- Reduce dust in the house by regularly cleaning with a damp mop and damp cloth. Have forced-air ducts cleaned by professionals and replace furnace filters often.



- Seed bare soil with grass seed or cover it with mulch. In high-traffic areas, such as swing sets or the bottoms of slides, use rubber mats to cover bare soil.



- Wash all garden vegetables with diluted vinegar or mild soap and rinse thoroughly prior to eating. Peel root vegetables, and discard older and outer leaves of leafy vegetables such as lettuce.

If you have any questions regarding the PHAI test results for your property, please contact the Historic Waste Program Management Office at 905.885.0291.

For further information regarding the contaminants identified on your property, you can also contact:

Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks District Manager: 1.800.558.0595