

The Corporation of the  
County of Prince Edward



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**NEWS RELEASE**

**Investigation Finds No Buried Herbicides in  
Hallowell Pickering Sand and Gravel Pit**

Picton ON– Prince Edward County has conducted an in-depth scientific and technical examination of the Hallowell Pickering Sand and Gravel Pit, based on information received that 20 five-gallon pails of herbicides were possibly buried there more than 25 years ago.

The investigation, undertaken on behalf of the County by EXP Services Inc., found no evidence of any pails or chemicals.

The 15-acre County-owned gravel pit is located to the west of Sandy Hook Road.

EXP Services Inc. is a well-regarded technical engineering company from Kingston, Ontario with an expertise in soil and ground water scientifically-based investigations. The Ontario Ministry of the Environment is being advised continuously of the stages of investigation and findings.

The study of the soil and ground water included electromagnetic surveys, ground penetrating radar, soil and water sampling, test hole excavations, and installation of three ground water monitoring wells and assessment of water samples.

This types of herbicide was commonly available and used broadly by municipalities, government agencies, utilities, private citizens and others to control weeds and brush years ago; however, they were de-regulated and effectively banned in Canada in the 1980's.

"The County's foremost concern in this examination was the safety of the drinking water that residents in the Sandy Hook area draw from a nearby aquifer. We are relieved that the thorough examination of the soil and the ground water shows no evidence of any pails or chemicals. We will continue to monitor the ground water," said Prince Edward County Mayor Peter A. Mertens. "I have asked County staff to continue to gather information on this matter and we will ensure that the public remains informed of any relevant findings."

A Fact Sheet is attached.

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For more information contact Mayor Mertens at 613.476.2148.

## FACT SHEET

### **Investigation Finds No Buried Herbicides in Hallowell Pickering Sand and Gravel Pit**

- Information concerning the alleged burial of 20 five-gallon pails of herbicides came to the attention of the County of Prince Edward in July, 2011.
- A former employee of the County, now retired, brought forward the information. To protect his privacy, the County will not reveal his name.
- The County is consulting with the Belleville office of the Ministry of the Environment, which continues to be involved.
- After extensive examination of both soil and ground water within the 15-acre sand and gravel pit using sophisticated equipment and employing people trained in this area of scientific investigation, no evidence of pails or chemicals was found.
- The herbicides (2, 4, 5-T and 2, 4-D) also referred to as "Agent Orange", were commonly available and used domestically by both the public, utilities and private sectors, as well as individuals prior to its being de-regulated and effectively banned in Canada.
- The County interviewed people who have knowledge of the Pickering Pit operations; however, this did not yield any information pertaining to the situation.
- Communication with the Waring Creek Improvement Association occurred throughout the process, concerning the allegations and indicating that as soon as relevant information arising from the investigating became available it would be provided.
- Preliminary findings on the investigation were received on Thursday, November 10, 2011.
- EXP Services Inc. will take additional ground water samples up to the spring of 2012 from the monitoring wells that have been installed along the downstream path of ground water from the area.
- These wells will be kept operational to allow for ongoing monitoring.

For more information, contact Robert McAuley, Commissioner of Public Works at 613.476.2148.