
NMWO BRIBES:

NUCLEAR-NEWS

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Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) of Canada bribing struggling towns to have nuclear waste dump



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Morrison said money has already come into Hornepayne because of its progression into the project. NWMO's Learn More Project provides funding to cover travel expenses for individuals who represent the community to meet with the NWMO at its office in Toronto. It also funds the hiring independent experts to advise the community (\$15,000 or less) and pays to support authorities to engage citizens in the community to learn about the project (\$20,000 or less).

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Nuclear waste debate divides Northern town _ Ben Cohen Special To The Sault Star, August 3, 2018 Hornepayne, Ont., a community of 980 people about 400 kilometres northwest of Sault Ste. Marie, is one of the five finalists to see who becomes home to a nuclear waste facility.

In 2011, the town entered a bid to become a repository for 5.2 million log-sized bundles of used nuclear fuel. They were joined by 21 other Canadian communities that have since been whittled down due to internal protest or geological unsuitability.

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) of Canada's plan is to take this used fuel, known as "high-level nuclear waste," contain it in steel baskets stuffed into copper tubes and encased in clay, and place that in a Deep Geological Repository (DGR), a 500-metre deep hole reinforced with a series of barriers. This is where it will stay for the 400,000 years it remains radioactive.

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Bradley Hammond, senior communications manager for NWMO, told the Sault Star that the project only moves forward if it receives “broad social acceptance” within the selected communities.

“We won’t proceed in an area with opposition,” he said, adding that he has complete confidence that NWMO will find a suitable town by 2023.

When asked if there was a plan in place if all five of the finalist communities, Huron-Kinloss, Ont., Ignace, Ont., Manitowadge, Ont., and South Bruce, Ont., back out of the project, Hammond indicated there isn’t, because that would be impossible.

A rally is being held in Hornepayne Aug. 14 to oppose the town being used for nuclear waste storage. Those at the helm of the rally said the project “exploits” their small town.

“Outside of war, this is the worst thing you can sign up for,” said Alison Morrison, a rally organizer. “(Nuclear waste) is the worst material known to man. This process has never been done anywhere in the world. We don’t want to be the test project.”

Morrison cited several fears some of the townsfolk have about the project, such as negative impact on tourism, water contamination from the DGR boring project and the risk of accident while transporting high-level waste along the highway.

“There are so many accidents on the highway, so much risk,” she said. “I don’t want to say ‘terrorist’ but it’s a very dangerous substance that could be the target of an attack.”

Despite all that, many in Hornepayne do support the project, including the current mayor, which Morrison said has created some strife.

“It’s really splitting the town up,” she said. “There are friends that don’t speak anymore. Entire families are divided.”

The dumping would bring benefit to the selected town. It comes with an influx of funding, jobs and industry.

The Municipality of Kincardine, Ont., which approved the installation of a DGR in 2004, earns \$1.05 million a year as a result, plus lump-sum payments that totalled at \$5.8 million for it and its adjacent municipalities.

“The financial gain aspect is very appealing to a struggling, small town,” said Morrison.

The difference between the Kincardine DGR and the one proposed for Hornepayne is that it only handles low and intermediate-level nuclear waste. This means minimally radioactive materials such as mop heads, rags, paper towels, floor sweepings and protective clothing used in nuclear stations, as well as used reactor components.

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The Municipality of Kincardine stipulated, in a resolution it passed, that no high-level waste would be taken in. This type of nuclear waste would be going to Hornepayne, should it be selected by the NWMO.

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Local resident Ken Fraser, who, along with his wife Sandra, has been opposing the dumping for the last seven years, said that the NWMO's funding goes deeper than that.

"(NWMO) is releasing \$300,000 this year and \$300,000 next year to Hornepayne if we stay in the process," he said. "Businesses that are for the project get some of that money from council and businesses that aren't don't get any."

Clarifying the above point, Ken and Sandra told The Star the Township of Hornepayne recently passed a bylaw to allow this \$300,000 investment from NWMO. Ken said this happened right after the waste dumping opposition asked council for referendum so that the entire town could vote on whether or not to pursue the project. The referendum was struck down.

The local Nuclear Waste Community Liaison Committee (NWCLC) facilitates the dispersal of this money throughout town. Ken said that nearly any organization, from the fire department to local hardware stores, can approach the NWCLC to get a funding recommendation which they can then take to Town Hall for approval.

Businesses can be offered unsolicited financial aid from the \$300,000 bursary, but Ken and Sandra note that, to their knowledge, businesses in open opposition of NWMO have never been offered any money.

Should those opposing businesses approach the NWCLC for money themselves, Ken and Sandra said they would be derided as hypocrites. They claim even purchasing products and services tangentially related to the nuclear waste funding can earn scorn from some in the pro-dumping camp.

"The (Royal Canadian) Legion here got \$25,000 to upgrade its kitchen. My wife was accused of being a hypocrite just for eating there because she opposes NWMO's presence here."

The Sault Star called the Township of Hornepayne. The treasurer, Melissa Chenier, forwarded the call to the chief administrative officer clerk, Gail Jeremy, who told The Star that Hornepayne Mayor Morley Forster would be in touch. He did not return the call.

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Ken and Sandra also provided the Sault Star with officiated documentation from Paul Dubé, Ontario's ombudsman, which they say shows the Township of Hornepayne's NWCLC violated the Municipal Act's open meeting requirements by holding a meeting on Jan. 12, 2016 that was "effectively closed to the public."

"It's pretty scary," said Ken. "They're bringing in 129 million kilograms of nuclear waste, 410 kilograms of which is plutonium, and putting it 20 kilometres from town."

The nuclear waste opposition's August rally will feature a speech from Dr. Gordon Edwards, co-founder and president of the Canadian Coalition for Nuclear Responsibility. MP Carol Hughes of the Algoma-Mantoulin-Kapuskasing district will also be in attendance.

"We're making flags, signs banners and t-shirts in a basement," said Sandra. "We don't have a budget like them."

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