

Possibly contaminated street sweepings from Mississauga may have ended up in Caledon and other communities

Ministry of Environment investigating, ordering Mississauga to track down and test sites

News Apr 05, 2017 by [Matthew Strader](#) Caledon Enterprise



File photo of street sweepers. - Toronto Star News Service

Mississauga street sweepings, alleged to be contaminated with arsenic and lead, may have been dumped in the Town of Caledon, and the city is now beginning to answer to a ministerial order to find and remove them.

In November 2016, the director of the Ontario Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change ordered the City of Mississauga to test and/or remove hundreds of loads of street sweepings that became free fill from 2004 to 2011. The loads were reportedly dumped in 47 sites across Ontario — three of which are listed in Caledon. Fifteen other locations were identified with no address.

Eight of those were identified by a town name — with no address — and seven simply by a name, such as Warden Pit, Newfie, Dan and Pat’s Farm.

The ministry is accusing Mississauga of not sufficiently testing the fill before shipping it out to these locations.

The city must now hire a forensic consultant to track down where the loads may have been dumped, including identifying the sites where no address was provided.

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According to the report, the loads may have been contaminated with arsenic and lead. One site in Cayuga, Ont. received between 950 and 1,050 tonnes of sweepings with at least nine samples containing lead, arsenic or antimony “at levels which could present an unacceptable risk to human health due to direct contact exposure”.

As well, the ministry report notes that electrical conductivity was tested in three of the nine samples at levels that could present a risk to plant and soil organisms.

For its part, the City of Mississauga is disputing the ministry and Terrapex’s findings in an ongoing appeal, claiming no risk to the public and millions in costs for its taxpayers should the city ultimately be held responsible for removing the allegedly contaminated material.

“There is no risk to human health or the environment from the materials delivered,” said a lawyer representing the town in a corporate report last year while specifically referencing the Cayuga site.

“With respect to the remaining sites, based on a preliminary risk evaluation, the city expert’s opinion is that the risk to human health or the environment from the materials is unlikely,” added the lawyer.

According to the report, 1795 Quarry Drive, Caledon (known as the Region of Peel recycling centre and dump) received 359 loads of sweepings in 2004 and 2005. The address 9043 County Road has a postal address of Palgrave, while the physical farm site is actually in Melancthon county, northwest of Shelburne. That site received 18 loads in 2011. An address identified as 18794 Horseshoe Hill Road was previously reported to have received 13 loads, but available records are currently under review to confirm its numbers.



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[According to a Toronto Star article published](#) April 2, Mississauga stopped offering the sweepings as free fill in 2012 after the ministry raised concerns.

“For now, none of the controversial fill will be dug up. The ministry said it has taken mitigation measures to protect the health of property owners while it continues its investigations,” according to the Star.

The Enterprise reached out to the three addresses identified in Caledon.

Terry Bolton, owner of Bolton Sod Co. at 9043 County Rd. said ministry officials attended his property late in 2016 and tested fill he received from the Mavis Yard in Mississauga.

“We were lucky, we hadn't even spread it yet,” he said.

After testing, Bolton was informed the fill was fine and he could proceed on with it.

Region of Peel Director of Waste Management Norm Lee said some street sweepings were accepted at the Caledon landfill site while it was still open and accepting waste.

"The street sweepings were disposed of in the landfill in accordance with applicable environmental regulations and the site's approval permit," said Lee.

The Enterprise was also not able to reach the owners at the Horseshoe Hill Road address by press time.

[The entire ministry report can be viewed here.](#)

With files from the Toronto Star and the Independent and Free Press