

Little Lake Chemical Spill

Questions & Answers

Updated: April 27, 2018

Who is responsible for monitoring this spill at Little Lake and advising the public of any concerns?

The Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC) is continuing to assess the recent spill from the GE facility. If any results indicate a possible risk to human health, the MOECC will notify Peterborough Public Health (PPH).

The MOECC has monitored PCBs in the Otonabee River for over 30 years. They expect the report from the latest monitoring to be available during the summer of 2018. The last report which was released in 2012 showed that PCBs were declining in little lake and the Trent Severn Waterway. The Trent Severn Waterway is owned by the Federal Government and they are responsible for making decisions regarding the sediments in the watercourse and have also conducted monitoring on PCBs in Little Lake over the past several years.

Are there any public health risks to the spill that is happening in Little Lake?

There is likely no risk to public health. PPH has reached out to the MOECC and learned that recent samples from the water in Little Lake Marina are all below the laboratory detection limits for PCBs as of April 27, 2018. To learn more about PCBs, [click here](#) or visit the Health Canada website (www.canada.ca) and search for PCBs.

What is Peterborough Public Health doing about this?

PPH is in regular contact with the MOECC and will advise the public if there are any public health concerns.

Will it be safe to swim at Beavermead or Rogers Cove beaches when they open?

PPH will start routine surveillance of public beaches in June to ensure that the water quality is safe for swimming during the summer months. The public beaches at Beavermead and Rogers Cove are sampled by Public Health Inspectors at least once each business day. All samples are submitted to the Peterborough Public Health Laboratory for bacteriological analysis. The water samples are tested for *E. coli* bacteria, an indicator of fecal contamination in the water. Beach sampling does not include testing for chemical contaminants. The MOECC is responsible for testing the water in Little Lake and advising PPH if PCB levels are above acceptable limits.

Is it safe to consume fish from Little Lake?

Residents are advised to consult the [Guide to Eating Ontario Fish](#) produced by the MOECC before consuming any fish from the Otonabee River. It's available online at www.ontario.ca and there's [a link](#) to it on the PPH website under the Food Safety section.

How is this spill impacting drinking water in the City of Peterborough?

The municipal water supply is unaffected by this spill because water for the City of Peterborough is drawn upstream and treated before going into residents' homes.