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**Written submission from
Anne White**

**Mémoire de
Anne White**

In the Matter of the

À l'égard de

**BWXT Nuclear Energy Canada Inc.,
Toronto and Peterborough Facilities**

**BWXT Nuclear Energy Canada Inc.,
installations de Toronto et Peterborough**

Application for the renewal of the licence for
Toronto and Peterborough facilities

Demande de renouvellement du permis pour les
installations de Toronto et Peterborough

Commission Public Hearing

Audience publique de la Commission

March 2 to 6, 2020

Du 2 au 6 mars 2020

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To whom it may concern,

I am writing to oppose the renewal of BWXT's operating licence that includes the additional flexibility to produce uranium pellets at the facility on Monaghan Road in Peterborough. I am a Peterborough resident who lives within 2 kilometres of the BWXT plant and I work as an early childhood educator at Prince of Wales Elementary School, situated across the road from BWXT's facilities. I am very concerned for the health of the children and staff I work with as well as the health of neighbours to the BWXT plant. I feel that the company has not made their proposal clear enough and so I am submitting this intervention to voice questions and concerns about the uranium pellet process. Peterborough residents deserve satisfactory answers to these very basic questions before being expected to make a decision about BWXT's proposal.

Context (History of Industry in Peterborough)

Last night, I saw a film called 'Town of Widows,' a documentary that documents how workers at the General Electric plant in Peterborough were poisoned by a toxic soup of chemicals that has resulted in extremely elevated levels of cancer amongst retirees. The documentary also calls attention to the fact that General Electric leaked toxic chemicals into the Peterborough environment, as well into communities downstream of Peterborough such as Hiawatha First Nation.

This film also documents in painful detail the way that governments and the company failed to address concerns of their employees as they were being poisoned. Repeatedly, workers were told that they needn't worry about any exposures, that they didn't have the knowledge or education to understand the science. BWXT is not General Electric. However, as you can see from the story I just told you, Peterboroughians need a lot of information, consultation and reassurances in order to trust a new company that also uses potentially toxic substances and wants to work with substances in the same residential neighbourhood that General Electric previously poisoned.

My Questions and Concerns

As a Peterborough resident who works in the neighbourhood and lives nearby, I have a series of questions that I need answers to with regard to BWXT's operations.

1) Based on reading about BWXT's record, I understand that the company currently makes uranium pellets in Toronto's West End. Here, the company has acknowledged that over a period of five years 46.2 grams of uranium have been released into the air and 3.62 kilograms of uranium have been released into the sewer system. The company has acknowledged that uranium can be ingested and pose a health risk to people in this way. With this in mind, I ask:

1a) What happens to uranium that is released? Where does it end up? If released into a sewer system, does it settle downstream?

1b) Is this release of uranium gradual? Or did it occur in one large dose? Is it's the latter, does that pose more of a risk to human health than a gradual release?

1c) Is it possible that uranium released over time, in small doses, could accumulate in particular environments? (See 1a))

1d) Have we studied the long-term effects of this form of industry in other communities? What do cancer rates look like in neighbourhoods located next to the production of uranium pellets?

2) What do emergency scenarios look like for the Peterborough facility? In a time when extreme weather events become more frequent, how is the company responding? What's the worst-case scenario? An explosion? A large release of uranium powder into the environment? What are the chances that neighbours to the plant could evacuate this situation unharmed? Will the company conduct emergency evacuation drills with residents?

3) In the event that major amounts of uranium did leak into the environment, either onsite or into the broader community, does BWXT commit to paying for the cleanup?

4) If BWXT did not take over their current facilities from General Electric's existing facilities, would the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission recommend locating this kind of industry right next to a school? Has BWXT considered other locations that are less proximate to schools and residential neighbourhoods?

In conclusion, I am a concerned resident of a city already struggling with the impacts of an industry's toxic legacy. I don't feel that I have the knowledge at this time to make recommendations, but I want to intervene with this written submission in order to pose what I think are very basic and reasonable questions for which, at this time, I have yet to receive satisfactory answers. This community deserves a lengthy process to consider all of the evidence before being asked to weigh the potential risks to human and environmental health that uranium pellet production poses.