

To whom it may concern,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposal to build a deep geological repository in northwest Ontario.

I am writing to you as a health care practitioner, and as a concerned citizen living in Manitoba.

As a health care provider I am responsible for informing clients of the benefits and possible risks of my proposed treatment, so the client can consent to proceed, with full knowledge. If the treatment I am going to provide will be harmful to the client, then I must abstain.

The proposal from the Nuclear Waste Management Organization ( NWMO) to establish a deep geological repository for high - level nuclear waste has prompted significant public health concerns.

The proposal is unclear about whether informed consent to proceed by Indigenous groups in the area of the planned DGR, has actually been obtained vs consent to further studies.

It is clear to me that the risks have been omitted or minimized.

Not having transportation included in the impact assessment concerns me.

That is where significant risk lies.

Transportation involves moving all of our present high level nuclear waste by truck - 2-3 shipments per day for the next 50 years - 35 tons of waste per trip, across Canada.

Each shipment will emit low levels of radioactivity - how much more if there was an accident. If there was an accident , who responds - what training is there for managing such an event ? Do the people living along transportation routes understand the risks ? Roads in Manitoba are primarily 2 lanes and need constant repair due to weather and high volumes of truck traffic. The roads that will be used are in northeastern and northwestern Ontario - also two lanes and poorly maintained. Can our roads support 350 tons x 3 every day for 50 years ? Would this not pose an increased risk of accidents?

Descriptors of safety are repeated in the proposal, but without clarification.

Canada's plan for the repository is to use " Safe engineered containers with seals ".How do we know they are safe ? Is there any proof that such containers will not leak ? Particularly over the long term - millennia. Do any containers exist that can provide such assurances ? Using the word safe doesn't make them safe.

" With strict regulatory oversight " - by whom - those goals are often stated at the beginning of an initiative but fail over time, left to future generations to pick up the pieces

History demonstrates the failure of such assurances - For the Dene people of Northern Saskatchewan with Uranium mining -the benefits were extolled, they were not informed of the risks - and they suffered environmental, health and social impacts from radioactive tailings and toxic dust. Watersheds , including rivers and lakes were contaminated.

Also the indigenous people of the Marshall Islands - promises were made that their health would not be affected. Risks were not explained.

The nuclear fallout had devastating and generational health effects on the Marshallese people and their environment which are still ongoing today.

Their fight to obtain the benefits that they were promised then continues today as well.

They were promised safely ...

The Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository in Nevada has stalled due to unanticipated geological failures including water infiltration and premature container corrosion.

There is no level of exposure to ionizing radiation that does not pose an associated risk to human health. Manitoba has an extensive system of rivers and lakes -our drinking water comes from a lake in Ontario.

The proposed site for the DGR sits at the headwaters of two major tertiary watersheds: the Wabigoon River and the Turtle River watersheds. Both of these contribute to the Winnipeg River System, which flows into Lake Winnipeg and eventually into Hudson Bay. The protection of both groundwater and surface water is essential. If radioactive contaminants from the DGR reached the surface, this is the path they would take.

A successful DGR may be possible, though not one in the world is yet fully operational. A full impact assessment, including transport, is necessary, with clear explanations of risk and plans for management of possible accidents determined ahead of time.

Then I might give my consent.

Respectfully,

Maureen Brouwer