



## Spring 2015

### ONEIA Annual General Meeting

While 2014 was a very active year for ONEIA, 2015 promises even greater opportunities to promote our agenda. At the Association's AGM, held February 19, Executive Director Alex Gill said ONEIA is "especially well positioned to respond to the province's climate change and job creation initiatives. Although we are a relatively small association in terms of members, 'pound for pound' we punch well above our weight."

Three new directors were elected for the 2015-2018 term: **Mike Deprez**, Director of Business Development for Walker Environmental Group, **Greg Jones**, Managing Director of Communications & Public Affairs for Terrapure Environmental, and **Paul Murray**, Senior Vice President and Director IAP Services North America for AECOM. They replace **Bob Stelzer** (Safety Power Inc.), **Ted Mao** (Trojan Technologies) and **Donald Gorber** (Senes Consultants Ltd.), who had completed their terms. In addition, two directors were re-appointed: **Derek Webb**, President and CEO of Biorem Technologies, and **Cecile Willert**, Senior Risk Assessor & Practice Lead for Pinchin Ltd.

## Environment Commissioner says compliance system "is broken"

On March 11, outgoing Ontario Environmental Commissioner Gord Miller continued a 15-year tradition, serving up a lively smorgasbord of eco-opinions and experiences to the full house attending ONEIA's annual breakfast forum at the Hyatt Regency in Toronto.

"Back in 2000, I was a controversial appointment by the Mike Harris government," Miller remembers. "Only one organization would touch me. So on February 4, 2000, I made my very first speech as Environmental Commissioner to ONEIA."

At this year's breakfast, one of his last appearances as Commissioner, Miller didn't pull any punches, sharing his insights on topical environmental issues ranging from the spreading of waste brines on Ontario roads to the province's failure to resolve long-standing compliance problems to the "plight of the pollinators." The Commissioner's appointment is scheduled to expire in May, 2015.

The Commissioner also fielded questions from the floor on a wide assortment of topics, including: the rehabilitation of abandoned mining sites ("the attitude is much healthier, but there seems to be little money"); 3Rs programs for the industrial, commercial and institutional sectors ("we've totally abdicated our responsibility for IC&I wastes"); the management of excess soils ("we have an excess digging problem"); and the presence of asphalt shingles and glass shards in compost ("both are a low priority with the Ministry").

### Ministry slow to act on complaints

A self-proclaimed "compliance guy" — Miller ran the Ministry of the Environment's Timmins and North Bay district offices back in the 1980s and 90s — the Commissioner says he receives far too many complaints about lingering environmental problems these days.

*"The system has broken down. Ministry budgets have been cut for 20 years, and [compliance officers] are able to do less and less. That's led to greater reliance on voluntary compliance, growing public frustration and an increased number of complaints crossing my desk."*

Ontario Environmental  
Commissioner Gord Miller  
March 11, 2015

## Upcoming ONEIA Events

**July 15, 2015**  
**ONEIA Golf Day**  
**"Go Green on the Green"**

Sign up soon for ONEIA's annual golf tournament, "Go Green on the Green," to enjoy a fun (and sometimes challenging) afternoon on the links and to network with a mix of environment and cleantech businesspeople. Proceeds from the event help support the Association and the great work Earth Rangers does in introducing kids to the environment.

The event is played in a "best ball" format with a shotgun start. A round of golf will be followed by an informal awards dinner. The event will be held at the Royal Ontario Golf Club, located at 6378 Trafalgar Road, just east of Milton, Ontario.

Stay tuned for updates on our fall **Environment Industry Day** and other special events. For details, contact **Marjan Lahuis** at the ONEIA office at 416-531-7884 or [mlahuis@oneia.ca](mailto:mlahuis@oneia.ca)

Miller cited an asphalt blender in Hamilton that continued to operate for years without a valid environment approval. He has also received repeated complaints about uncontrolled dust emissions from a cement maker outside Picton and a mining operation north of Peterborough.

Some of these unresolved issues have persisted for more than a decade. For example, the Commissioner says the Aam-jiwnaang First Nation, located in Sarnia's chemical valley, has had to deal with air quality problems for years without an adequate response from the Ministry.

"They can't move the reserve or the petrochemical plant, so the protective systems *have* to work," Miller says. However, the

MOECC has yet to address "repeated failures of emergency systems and persistent health complaints" by residents.

The Ministry is "not doing its job," Miller says. "A breakdown of the regulator leads to the breakdown of the system."

### The system has broken down

Miller says the MOECC's compliance policy contains a wide range of voluntary and mandatory

compliance tools, right up to and including prosecutions.

"The informed judgment matrix shows how and when to use a particular tool in the tool box," Miller says. "Sometimes a company needs a Control Order to convince them to spend big money on compliance."

"The system has broken down," Miller says. "Ministry budgets have been cut for 20 years, and [compliance officers] are able to do less and less. That's led to greater reliance on voluntary compliance, growing public frustration and an increased number of complaints crossing my desk."

### Rules needed on road salt

The Commissioner is also critical of the use of sodium brines, largely wastes from salt mines, as dust suppressants on Ontario roads during the summer. "This is just pure sodium chloride," he says, "and it doesn't work. It simply washes away with the first rainfall."

*"While I can be fiercely critical when the Ministry doesn't do its job, I know why it's happening," Miller says. The government "has been kicking the stuff out of the Ministry for 20 years, starving it of funding and demoralizing the staff."*



**We certainly "broke the ice on the ice" this winter.** Due to overwhelming demand, ONEIA hosted two curling bonspiels: the first on January 28th at the Brampton Curling Club and the second on March 24th at the Guelph Curling Club. More than 100 ONEIA members enjoyed "learn to curl" clinics, followed by three-game, six-end bonspiels, as well as snacks, beverages and lots of networking.



Miller is worried that the practice could lead to the spreading of contaminated “fracking wastewaters” on roads in the future. He has recommended that the MOECC regulate the use and disposal of ground-sourced brine from oil and gas extraction activi-

ties for dust suppression.

“This is already happening in the United States,” Miller said. “We don’t have the problem here yet, but we don’t have any rules in place either.”

### Commissioner still getting in trouble

“In 2014, I got myself in trouble with a couple of industry groups,” Miller laughs. The chapter in his most recent Annual Report discussing the collapse of Ontario’s honey bee populations angered several pesticide manufacturers, while his call to curb logging in Algonquin Provincial Park upset a number of commercial logging firms.

Over the last seven years, overwintering losses of bee colonies have averaged 31 per cent in Ontario, about double the sustainable level. There’s little doubt that disease and parasites play a role, but it appears a widely used class of water soluble, neuro-toxic neonicotinoid pesticides are also implicated.

“It’s not just about bees,” Miller says. “Other pollinators are being affected. It’s killing insect larvae in streams, and the populations of many insect eating birds are also in decline.”

The Commissioner recommends that the MOECC and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs undertake monitoring to see if there are significant quantities of neonicotinoids present in soils, waterways and plant tissues. “Bans can be effective, but first I want to know if it’s out there in the ecosystem,” Miller says.

## ONEIA Member Profile: Ground Force Environmental Inc.



A full-service environmental remediation contractor, Ground Force Environmental Inc. (GFEI) has been providing an ever growing range of services and products across Ontario over the last six years. “Our goal is to offer cost effective solutions that

minimize short and long-term risks to the environment,” says GFEI Project Manager Tyler Dilley.

Based in Kitchener, GFEI also operates a smaller satellite office in the Peterborough area. “It’s important to have our equipment and personnel local in other municipalities to better service our clients and reduce response times for our spill response and insurance work,” says Dilley.

The company is structured into three basic business units. The technology team handles soil and groundwater remediation, including bioremediation, chemical oxidation, solidification and other *in situ* work. The remediation projects team handles excavation and bulk earth removal, as well as underground and aboveground storage tanks. And the insurance team takes care of spills, responding to truck turnovers and leaking residential fuel oil tanks.

A subsidiary, RCT Bins, is a roll-off disposal container company and licensed carrier for standard waste, contaminated soil, bulk asbestos, spill clean-up materials, and liquid industrial and hazardous wastes. GFEI also offers a variety of environmental products, including oil removal products, absorbent mats, filters, containment booms, etc.

GFEI can handle all aspects of a brownfields project. “We can do any demolition work needed to get at impacted materials,” says Dilley. “We can even remove asbestos and other hazardous materials so a client doesn’t have to hire two or three different contractors to handle one decontamination job.”

GFEI currently employs 45 to 50 people year round, says Dilley, “but when the business heats up in the summer, the staff can increase to a peak of 60 to 65 employees.” The company is continuing to grow — there are a lot of opportunities for work in Northern Ontario these days says Dilley — and will have a couple interesting announcements in the months ahead. For more info, visit the website at [www.gfei.ca](http://www.gfei.ca) or call 519-664-0767.

## ONEIA files detailed comments on Ontario's climate change discussion paper

ONEIA has submitted its formal response to Ontario's discussion paper on climate change. Member companies provided feedback through a province-wide conference call, and this information was supplemented by input from the board, advocacy committees, and a task force struck to coordinate our response. ONEIA's submission, available on our website (under "ONEIA News"), includes the following recommendations:

- Measures should be implemented to accelerate the ability of firms to write off the capital costs of purchasing and installing new environmental technology.
- Specific and firmly enforced emission targets/pricing should not require significant additional government funding if linked to either carbon or tax credits.
- The Province should designate five per cent of future infrastructure allocations to fund demonstration projects, pilots and other innovative approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Targeted programs, tax write-offs and other measures should be introduced to motivate existing environment and cleantech companies to conduct research that leads to commercially viable climate change technologies and services.
- The Province should make a firm commitment toward the adoption of performance-based conservation, and should introduce measures to quantify savings and rapidly scale up the approaches that deliver proven savings.

## ONEIA welcomes our newest members

### **exp. Services Inc.**

Provides professional, technical and strategic consulting services worldwide in six key practice areas: building engineering, earth and environment, infrastructure engineering, planning and design, program and project management, and sustainability.

### **Houle Chevrier Engineering Ltd.**

Together with GEMTEC Limited, Houle Chevrier provides consulting services in the fields of geotechnical engineering, hydrogeology, environmental engineering, land development, and materials testing and inspection to clients in Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada.

### **Lovell & Associates Inc.**

Undertakes executive and management recruitment for a wide range of positions, including finance, sales and marketing, HR, engineering, operations, manufacturing, R&D, chemicals and information technology.

### **TerraNova Environmental Services Inc.**

Formerly Pinnacle Environmental, TerraNova is a contaminated site and waste management services company specializing in site decommissioning, excavation, environmental remediation, and hazardous materials handling.

### **Terrapure Environmental**

Formerly the industrial division of Newalta, Terrapure operates a network of waste management, material recovery and industrial service facilities across Canada, including a used oil refinery in BC, a battery recycling facility in Quebec, and an industrial waste landfill in Ontario.

### **XPV Capital Corporation**

A private equity and venture capital firm investing in "world class" water-related technologies and businesses, XPV specializes in early, mid, emerging, growth and late stage investments in the middle market.

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