



# The Green Party of Manitoba

“Quality of life? – We can do better!”

## PRECAUTION VS. POLLUTION: A SOMBER ANNIVERSARY

-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: (January 8, 2010)-

Today marks an anniversary that the Manitoba Government has little reason to celebrate. On January 8<sup>th</sup> of 2009, the government allowed Louisiana Pacific Canada Ltd. (LP) to shut down equipment which controlled industrial pollutants at its big wood products plant in the Swan Valley.

The Leader of the Green Party of Manitoba (GPM), James Beddome, labels the government’s decision to let LP take those controls offline as “hasty, unwise and without public input.”

Public outcry led to a March 26, 2009 request by the Minister of Conservation to the Clean Environment Commission (CEC), a provincial advisory body, to conduct an investigation into whether the “temporary” shutdown should be made permanent.

Private citizens from the Swan Valley and across Manitoba, The Concerned Citizens of the Valley (CCV), The Boreal Forest Network, The Manitoba Wildlands, The Manitoba Wildlife Federation, The MFL Occupational Health Centre, and The Green Parties of Manitoba and Canada all voiced their opposition to the proposal.

The CCV and the Boreal Forest Network, in combination with the Public Interest Law Centre (PILC) funded an independent study which was submitted to the CEC on September 8 of 2009. The study revealed that the data submitted by LP to Manitoba Conservation which formed the basis on which the “temporary” shut-down was allowed failed to meet Manitoba guidelines.

- Dr. Gordon Brown, of Intrinsic Environmental Sciences Inc. ([www.intrinsikscience.com](http://www.intrinsikscience.com)), concluded that **“... the human risk calculations provided by LP Canada DO NOT represent current accepted practice for human health risk assessment in Canada and the US.”**
- Mr. David Chadder of RWDI AIR Inc. ([www.rwdiair.com](http://www.rwdiair.com)) concluded that **“... the air quality impacts have not been properly documented or accounted for by LP Canada.”**
- Dr. Charles Simon of Precision Analytical Laboratories Inc., an expert on the Hazardous Air Pollutants (HAPs) and Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) emitted by the Swan Valley OSB mill, concluded that: **“A modern bioreactor may be able to perform as BACT at Swan River for less than the cost of replacing the RTOs and about one-fourth of the cost of operating the RTOs and WESPs.”**

Faced with deficient data, the CEC ordered LP to submit data that conformed with provincial guidelines. The first time in the history of environmental assessment in Manitoba that the CEC has asked a proponent to redo an assessment.

“I applaud the CEC for being thorough in its investigation, but the real shame is those pollutants have continued to be released unchecked, for more than a year!” said Larry Powell, a Roblin resident and the Manitoba Green Party's Food Security Critic. Larry has contacted former Conservation Minister Stan Struthers, present Conservation Minister Bill Blaikie, and the Swan River MLA Rosann Wowchuk regarding the issue. He has received no response.

LP has threatened closure of the plant if it is forced to keep the RTOs in operation. Understandably local residents are concerned about the impact that this may have.

“The government cannot be unmindful of job losses. We can and must protect both jobs and the health of those who live in the Swan Valley. Biofiltration technology exists that could reduce operating costs, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, while adequately controlling toxic pollutants.”, assured Beddome.

Today numerous organizations and individuals somberly mark the anniversary of the RTO shutdown while reaffirming their commitment to hold companies accountable. St Adolphe resident Cheryl Kennedy Courcelles commented: “We in Manitoba are leaders. We are only interested in dealing with corporations that meet our standards. If we keep our standards high we will attract those companies that will want to come and be leaders here with us. Doing what is right pays dividends!”

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#### ABOUT THE GREEN PARTY OF MANITOBA

The Green Party of Manitoba was officially established in 1998. The aim of the Green Party is to achieve a sustainable society, recognizing that ecological, social, and economic concerns are interdependent. We seek to participate in elections and educate the public and government about sustainability and the ways we can achieve this goal. More information can be found at [GreenParty.mb.ca](http://GreenParty.mb.ca).

#### WEB REFERENCES:

Clean Environment Commission, “LP RTO Hearing: Transcripts & Submissions”:  
[http://www.cecmanitoba.ca/home/hearings/current\\_hearings/lp\\_rto/exhibits/](http://www.cecmanitoba.ca/home/hearings/current_hearings/lp_rto/exhibits/)

Manitoba Wildlands, “CEC Investigation and Meetings:  
Louisiana-Pacific OSB Plant Emissions”:  
[http://www.manitobawildlands.org/forests\\_mb\\_ind.htm](http://www.manitobawildlands.org/forests_mb_ind.htm)

(SCROLL DOWN TO LP. Additional submissions not found on the CEC webpage, along with the reports of the independent experts can be found on the Manitoba Wildlands Webpage)

Earthkeeper Farms Blogspot, “Standing the Precautionary Principle on its Head”:  
<http://earthkeeperfarm.blogspot.com/2010/01/standing-precautionary-principle-on-its.html>

One Earth, “Battle in the Boreal-- Rekindling the Air Pollution Debate”:  
<http://www.onearth.org/node/1286>

Science and Environmental Health Network, “Precautionary Principle”:  
<http://www.sehn.org/precaution.html>

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