

**Western University**

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**From the Selected Works of Richard B. Philp**

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## Environews #7

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Environews #7: We've heard a lot of concern expressed over the proposed establishment of a low-level radioactive waste dump near the shores of Lake Huron. But that isn't the only hazardous material to be buried under ground. Near Yellowknife in the NWT there is a buried cold storage facility that contains 237,000 tons of arsenic trioxide (yes, 237,000) in a solid block of ice. The  $AsO_3$  is a by-product of gold production at the Giant Mine which was in operation for 50 years. Residents of Yellowknife and local First Nations people worry about possible contamination of Great Slave Lake. Other environmental disasters include buildings contaminated with arsenic and asbestos.

Scientists from the University of Waterloo have identified levels of artificial sweeteners in the Grand River that are the highest recorded anywhere. These chemicals are excreted unchanged by the body and constitute useful markers to track human waste contamination of waterways. Their impact on the environment is as yet unknown.

The attack on Canada's environmental protection laws continues. The federal Species at Risk Act is scheduled for an overhaul that is likely to weaken protection for some species and Ontario's Endangered Species Act has already done so through modifications designed to clear the way for unhampered industrial development.