

OUR TROUBLED ENVIRONMENT

KEY ISSUES

Ontario's environmental issues continue to suffer from neglect. Neither the Conservative nor Liberal governments have made a provincial commitment to meet Kyoto targets. As smog days increase, the Liberals have no real plan to limit emissions.

In the 1990s, the Conservative government destroyed Ontario's ability to regulate its environmental quality in the public interest. They also made the largest cuts to the Ministry of the Environment in our province's history. By privatizing hydro generation and therefore tying it to free trade agreements, the Conservatives reduced Ontario's ability to control emissions.

The Liberals have failed to reverse the Conservatives' legislation barring public power utilities from pursuing green power generation, thereby allowing the private sector to reap profits from renewable energy. What Ontario really needs is a commitment to developing and investing in a real conservation program led by public power utilities and others in the public sector, which includes a plan for new, green jobs in the province.

Both Conservatives and Liberals favour incineration of garbage, which also puts these services into the hands of private corporations. The Liberals appear to be backing away from a plan for 60% waste diversion from landfill.

Boil water advisories continue to be issued right in communities across the province, especially on First Nations' reserves. And beaches and swimming areas are frequently closed due to crumbling infrastructure. Conservative government cuts to public service staff and regulatory cutbacks were a factor in the Walkerton tragedy. And today, the Liberals continue to fall short on clean water targets laid out in the Walkerton inquiry.

THE PARTIES REPORT CARD

Conservatives

- No commitment to Kyoto; privatized electricity generation; favour incineration of garbage
- Cuts to public service staff and regulatory cutbacks were a factor in Walkerton tragedy

Liberals

- No commitment to Kyoto; backing away from landfill diversion in favour of burning garbage
- Paying lip service to conservation; no real plan for the environment

NDP

- Will meet Kyoto targets; 'Right to Know' law would reduce exposure to toxins; committed to full Public Power and tough energy efficiency targets
- Committed to integrating environmental platform into a plan that builds communities, saves and creates jobs, respects public services and meets environmental challenges in a way that will not negatively impact working families

CUPE ONTARIO'S POSITION ...

Our choice: Only the NDP will meet Kyoto targets and table 'Right to Know' laws regarding carcinogens and toxins.