May 12, 2008

His Worship Fred Eisenberger
Mayor
City of Hamilton
77 James Street North, Suite 230
Hamilton ON L8R 2K3

Dear Mayor Eisenberger:

Thank you for forwarding a copy of your February 28, 2008 letter to Premier McGuinty concerning St. Marys Cement’s proposed quarry in Hamilton (East Flamborough). The Premier has asked that I respond to you about the matters raised in your letter.

As you have pointed out, there are potential groundwater issues that the proposed land use may have for adjacent residential, communal and municipal users. I am aware that the land use decision has not been made by the City of Hamilton and in order to inform the City’s decision, a Hydrogeological Work Plan has been required which includes a pumping test for a proposed Groundwater Recirculation System.

I appreciate your concerns with respect to source water protection planning. Information obtained from the test and/or future tests would assist both the Source Water Protection Planning Committee and the City of Hamilton in making decisions around land use and threats assessment.

This pumping test has received thorough assessment from this ministry and other agencies, including the Hamilton Public Health Department. A group of technical experts have collaborated to review available information to determine if the test should proceed and if it does, that the test is done properly and all environmental impacts are monitored and the use of water by existing users is not affected. That group has reached consensus on how the test can be carried out safely. Issuing of the permit in no way supports the establishment of a quarry in this location by this ministry.
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On April 16, 2008, ministry staff attended a public meeting arranged by St. Marys Cement in the village of Carlisle to explain ministry concerns about the proposed pumping test, to explain what would be done to carry out the test safely and to receive public input. In addition, a draft permit has been made available on the Environmental Registry under Registry #010-3469 for further public input prior to a decision being made.

If you require additional information or clarification, please contact Mr. Carl Slater, Technical Support Manager at the ministry’s West Central Region Office, at 905-521-7720.

Thank you, again, for bringing your concerns to my attention.

Sincerely,

John Gerretsen
Minister

To The Honourable Dalton McGuinty
Premier