

## **THE INQUIRY AND ITS MANDATE**

The Walkerton Inquiry is an independent Commission set up to examine the contamination of the water supply in Walkerton, Ontario, by E.Coli bacteria and to look into the future safety of the water supply in Ontario. The Commission's findings and recommendations will be presented to the Ontario government and made public.

The contamination in Walkerton was discovered in May and June 2000. Hundreds of people in the town became ill and several have died.

The Commission's mandate is to inquire into the cause of these events including the effect, if any, of government policies, procedures and practices and to make recommendations to ensure the safety of drinking water in Ontario.

The Commission was established on June 12, 2000, by the Government of Ontario under the Public Inquiries Act. Its findings, conclusions and recommendations will be delivered to the Attorney General of Ontario who shall make them public.

Dennis R. O'Connor, a Justice of the Court of Appeal for Ontario, was appointed Commissioner.

After his appointment, Justice O'Connor said that the Commission's terms of reference will enable him to carry out a full and thorough inquiry.

"I am satisfied that I have sufficiently broad powers under the terms of reference and under the Public Inquiries Act to carry out this very wide mandate," he said.

[Taken from The Walkerton Inquiry website (<http://www.walkertoninquiry.com/>)]