

## Urgent Call for Action: Immediate Shutdown of Hazardous Shipbreaking Site in Union Bay

Dear Government Officials,

We, the undersigned, are reaching out with deep concern for the health and safety of our families, the well-being of our community, and the preservation of the marine environment in Baynes Sound. It has come to our attention that the operations at the shipbreaking site adjacent to our residential community are not only hazardous but are in blatant violation of both national and international environmental and safety standards. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fHo4diupeM4>

### **Evidence of Hazardous Practices and Environmental Violations:**

- Government tests have confirmed the presence of known toxins such as lead and cadmium at concentrations 20 times above the Provincial maximum allowable limits, as detailed in records of the Ministry of the Environment.

<https://nrced.gov.bc.ca/records;keywords=5084>

- Asbestos, a recognized carcinogen, has been confirmed on the premises, notably within the structure of the USA Miller Freeman, with a high probability existing in the larger USA NOASS Surveyor.
- A petroleum spill from the Miller Freeman, documented and available for public viewing here, poses a significant risk to the local ecosystem.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stz5rXpRFgE>

- These hazardous materials, as defined under the Hazardous Waste Regulation, are being mishandled, exposing workers, the surrounding community, and the environment to severe risks. The practice of shipbreaking on bare ground, using cutting torches without containment measures, mirrors the dangerous and unregulated conditions found in less developed countries.

Despite the BC Province rejecting the operator's application to discharge effluent into the ocean in December 2023, evidence suggests that these discharges continue unabated, as per the documentation available here.

<https://j200.gov.bc.ca/pub/ams/download.aspx?PosseObjectId=152408939>

### **Legal and International Standards Ignored:**

The Basel Convention, ratified by Canada in 1992, clearly defines end-of-life vessels as hazardous waste, yet this site operates without regard to this classification.

The NGO Shipbreaking Platform and the International Labor Organization highlight the global consensus on the dangers of shipbreaking, underscoring the gross negligence at the Union Bay site.

The lack of community consultation and the disregard for minimum setback requirements betray a profound disrespect for the well-being of our community and environmental integrity.

For Example:

- BC Landfill minimum setback requirements to sensitive areas (residences, regional parks, is 500m.
- Alberta minimum setback requirements for Hazardous Waste Management facilities is 450m.
- DFO (Area 14.28) prohibits shellfish harvesting within 400m of this shipbreaking site.
- The BC Province likes to call this a Recycling Operation - even their own recycling legislation identifies the toxins found at this site as hazardous waste.

**Our Demands:**

Given the clear evidence of hazardous operations and the violation of legal and ethical standards, we demand the following immediate actions:

Shutdown of the Current Shipbreaking Site: Cease all operations at the site to prevent further environmental damage and health risks.

Comprehensive Site Remediation: Implement a thorough cleanup of all hazardous materials and pollutants released into the environment.

Regulatory Compliance Review: BC/ Canada to ratify the Hong Kong Convention for the safe recycling of ships and not allow the beaching of vessels or ship recycling in an ecological sensitive area.

We acknowledge the necessity of shipbreaking as a part of maritime operations but insist it be conducted in facilities equipped with proper containment (dry dock) and safety measures, far removed from residential areas and sensitive marine ecosystems.

The health, safety, and environmental risks currently posed by the shipbreaking operations in Union Bay are unacceptable. We urge you to take immediate action and shutdown this hazardous waste site to protect our community, our environment, and the integrity of Baynes Sound.

We look forward to your prompt response and are open to discussing this matter further. Please consider this letter a call for urgent action and accountability.

Sincerely,

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<https://concernedcitizensofbaynessoundorg.wordpress.com/>