

Junction odors no threat, study finds Air problems called social, not technical.  
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An environmental audit of the Junction Triangle indicates that the community's air quality is not much different than that measured in other areas of Toronto.

However, the consultant's study, based on information compiled by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, concludes that emissions from 12 industrial companies in the Junction area may cause odor problems. "People's right to enjoy their property is being interfered with" by regular emissions from industry that sits cheek-by-jowl with area homes, said Kenneth Hale, chairman of the local anti-pollution group, on reading the ministry- financed audit that was made public last night. "We'd like to know when (the odors are) going to be stopped," Mr. Hale said. "These (industries) aren't being prosecuted because the ministry doesn't think that's the way to go about it." Barney Singh, the ministry's chief pollution abatement officer for the area, conceded that the area "is not going to (have) an odor-free environment" because of the presence of industry. "The big problem is to establish what level of odor, what duration of odor, what frequency of odor is acceptable. "It is an extremely difficult thing to do because that is a decision that must come from the community. It is a social problem, it is not a technical problem" to determine how much odor people can live with, Mr. Singh said in an interview last night.

A 10-day organic chemical air survey in the triangle by Environment Canada in August found detectable levels of toluene and xylene in the air. The sampling found lower concentrations on the weekends as compared to weekdays when the plants were operating.

The \$106,000 consultant's report, financed by the provincial Environment Ministry, was completed for the Junction Triangle Environmental Liaison Committee whose members come from industry, residents' groups and government.

Mr. Hale said that residents are contemplating legal action if the ministry does not take quick action to control odor-producing industries in the area. "We're going to have to consider taking some (legal) action on our own because the ministry's approach seems to be a live-and-let-live attitude," he said. "We're not going to go down to the courthouse tomorrow and sue someone, but I think it's an option we have to consider unless these odors are going to stop and I don't see with the technology they're using that it's going to be possible," he said. "If the objective can't be met then I think the companies should

consider relocating," he added.

In a prepared statement, Environment Minister James Bradley said: "I wish to assure the residents that I will be following up immediately with senior ministry staff to assess what steps can be taken to overcome the deficiencies in our control program. "Area residents may be assured that we will not relax our efforts to reduce odors," he said.

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