

# Walkerton - From Infamy To Excellence

Bruce Davidson

Concerned Walkerton Citizens

P.O. Box 1376

Walkerton, Ontario

N0G 2V0

Phone: 519-881-0884

Email: [cwc@bmts.com](mailto:cwc@bmts.com)

# From Anonymity To Infamy

- May 2000 Walkerton, E-coli enters water system
- Seven dead, thousands became ill
- Walkerton - Brand Name for Contaminated Water

# Air Ambulance stationed in Walkerton



# Main street lined with masses of media



PHOTO BY ANNE EAYIN

**Media scrum outside Sacred Heart Church**

# Anatomy of a Systemic Breakdown

- Many factors combine to create disaster
- Well #5 placement and zoning



MARC BOLDUC, RCMP

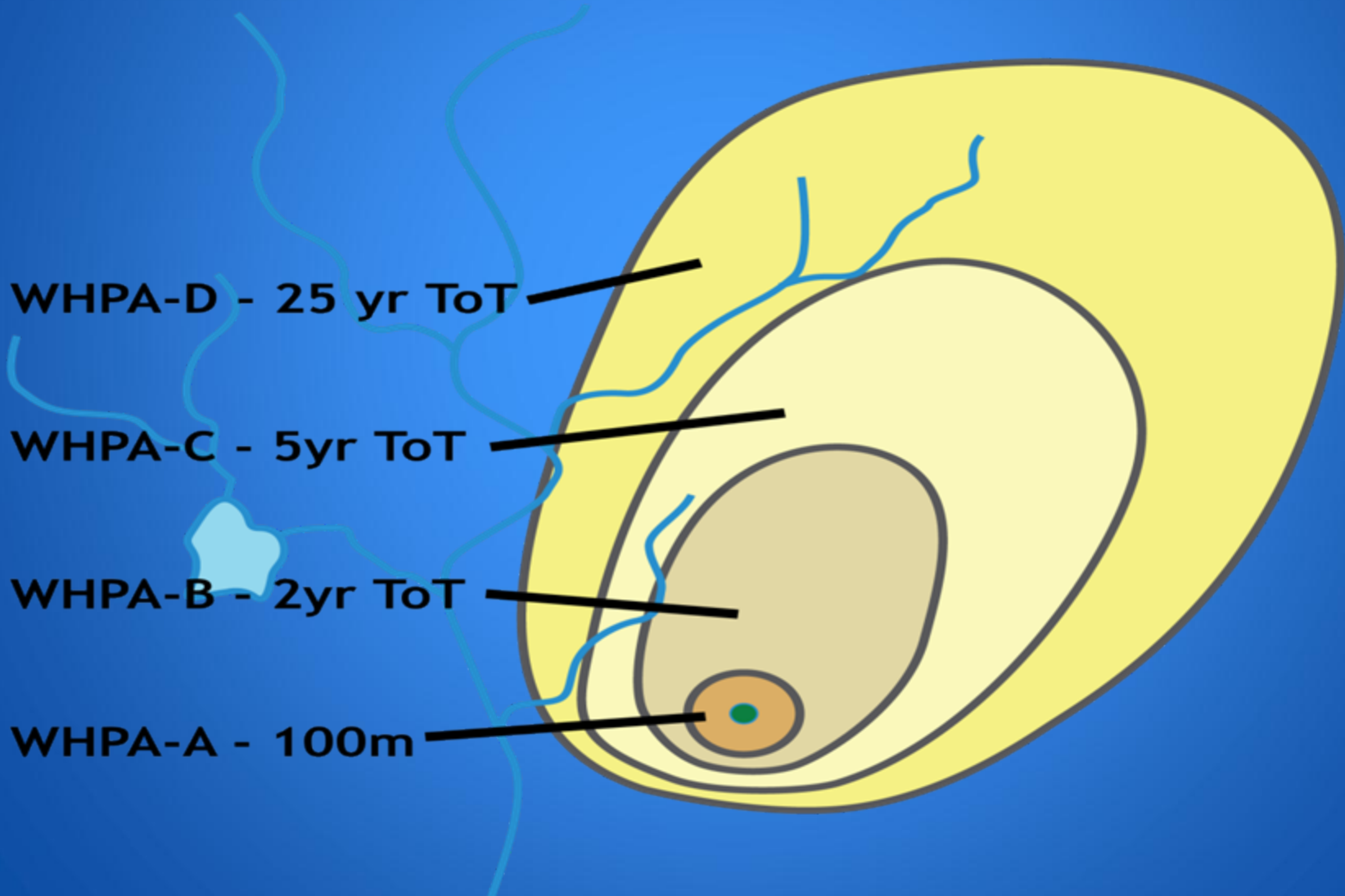
An aerial view of Well #5 and the surrounding area.

# Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA) Delineation

- WHPA - A
- WHPA - B
- WHPA - C
- WHPA - D

Municipal Well

Waterbody



# Anatomy of a Systemic Breakdown.....continued

- Maintenance of wells
- Operator training
- Falsification of records
- Public Utilities Commission
- Ministry of Environment



# Anatomy of a Systemic Breakdown.....continued

- Local Health Unit
- Private Laboratory
- Water main construction
- Spills Action
- Government of Ontario - 11 separate warnings
- Voluntary compliance
- Risk management

# THE COST OF GETTING IT WRONG

- Experts suggest up to 15% of population may suffer Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome.
- Loss of business to other communities.
- Municipal insurance 3 times average cost.
- Cuts to MOE \$40 million.
- Cost of tragedy \$150 million.
- Ongoing illness.

# Cost of a Crisis - \$64.5 Million \*

Other Gov't Agency Costs	\$	11,110,184
OCWA & System Remediation	\$	9,222,215
Inquiry Costs	\$	9,000,000
Household Costs	\$	6,916,949
Town Costs	\$	6,548,523
Health & Epidemiological Study Costs	\$	5,212,160
Emergency Water Provision	\$	4,167,179
Health Unit & HU Assistance	\$	3,150,000
Local Business Losses (incl. Prod)	\$	2,694,435
Long-term health	\$	2,497,932
Loss Property Values	\$	1,106,136
Legal - Private	\$	1,000,000
Samples, labs, reporting	\$	645,000
Hospital Stays & Air Trans.& Opp. Cost	\$	597,418
Coroner Costs	\$	559,824
Physician Visits	\$	99,239
	\$	64,527,194

*The economic costs of the Walkerton Water Crisis – Dr. J Livernois for Walkerton Inquiry.*

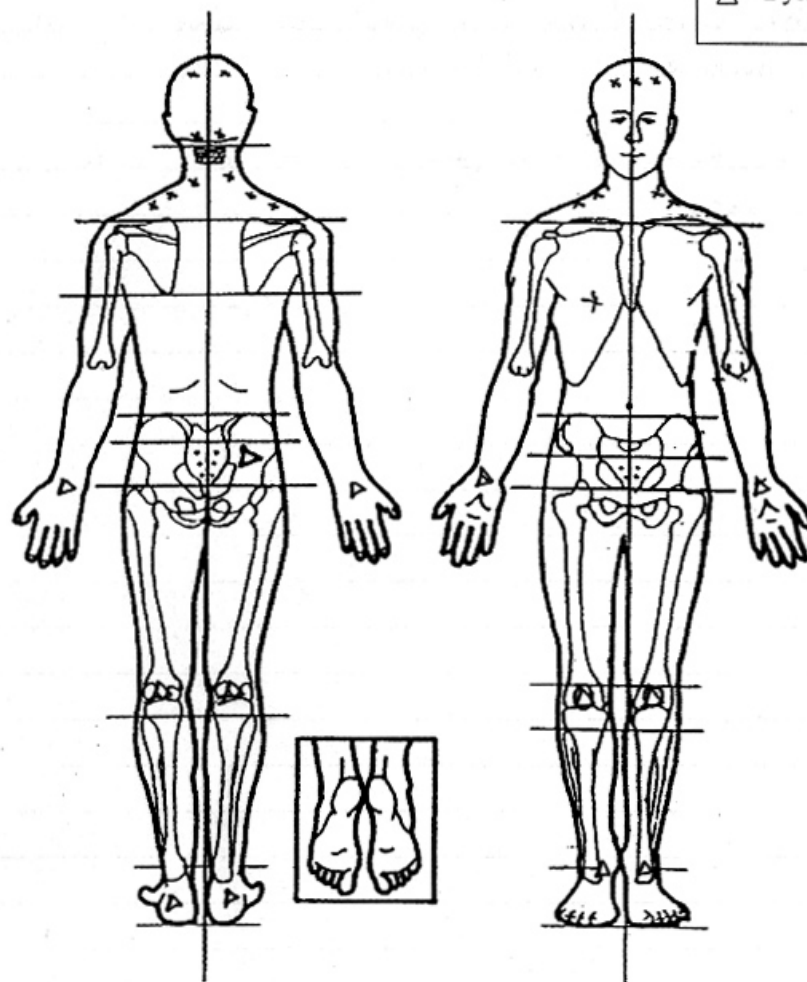
# CONSEQUENCES OF ILLNESS

- Hemolytic Urea Syndrome
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Reactive Arthritis
- Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome
- High blood Pressure
- Diabetes

Please indicate **current symptoms/conditions** using the index and diagram of the human body provided:

**Index:**

X = Pain  
O = Condition  
(diagnosed by doctor)  
△ = Dysfunction

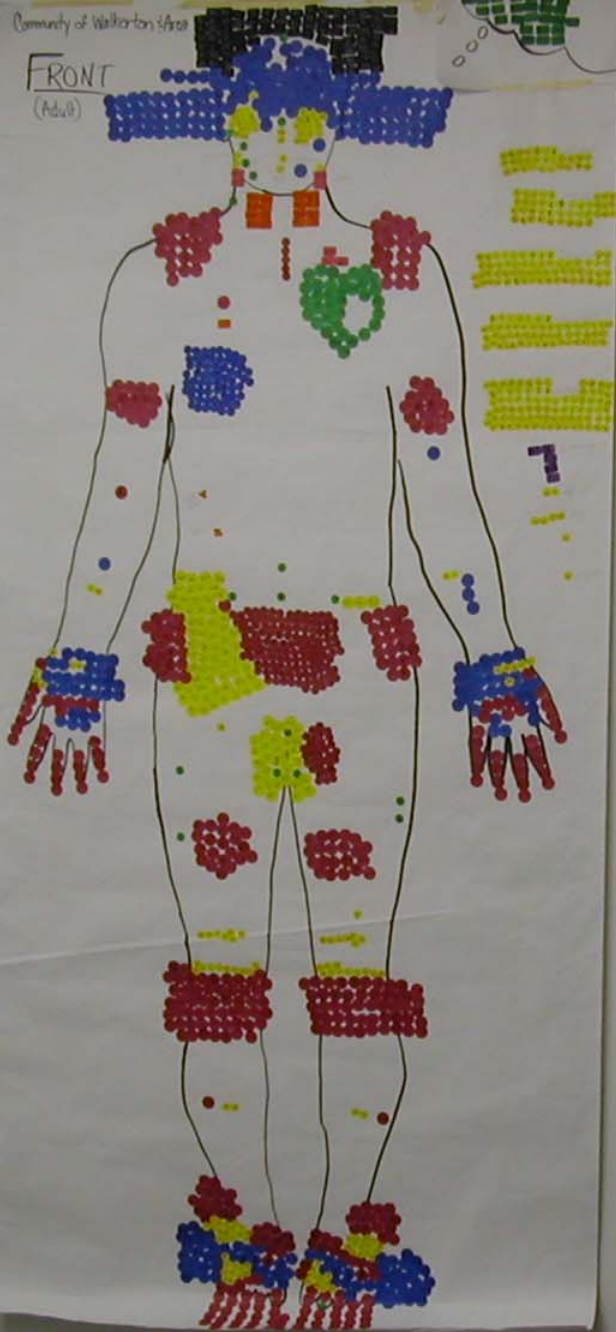


Has a medical professional documented/indicated a relationship between your diagnosis and the 2000 water contamination exposure? (please circle appropriate)  Y  N

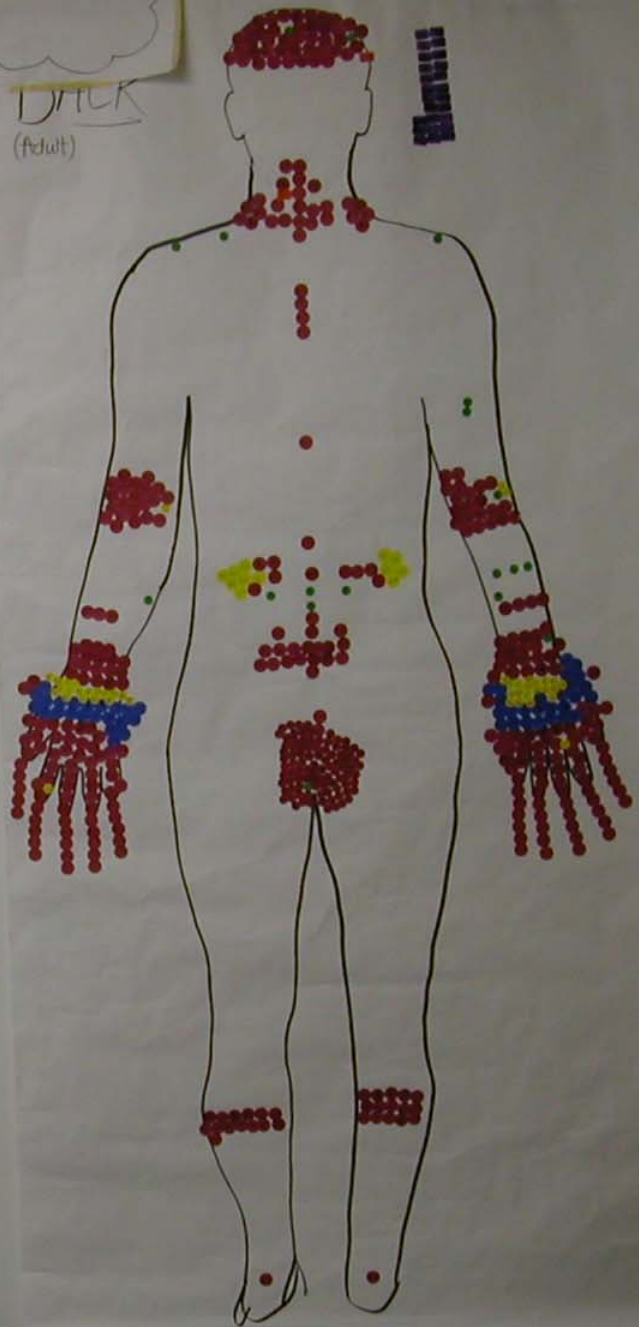


Community of Wellington (1988)

FRONT  
(Adult)



BACK  
(Adult)







# Life Sentences

- Illness
- Medication
- Time
- Future



# HOW CLOSE MUST ILLNESS COME BEFORE WE ACT?

- Woman with IBS.
- Man with reactive arthritis.
- Young boy with gout symptoms.
- Man with diabetes and high blood pressure.

PART ONE

# REPORT OF THE WALKERTON INQUIRY

The Events of *May 2000*  
and Related Issues

The Honourable Dennis H. O'Connor







**Ontario Clean Water Agency**  
**Agence Ontarienne Des Eaux**





















**WCWC** Walkerton  
Clean Water Centre  
An agency of the Government of Ontario

**CWAE** Centre de Walkerton  
pour l'assainissement de l'eau  
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario













































## WELL 5 MEMORIAL

This plaque marks the location of Walkerton's former Well 5 which supplied a portion of the town's drinking water from 1978 into the spring of 2000. In mid May of the year of 2000, extremely heavy rains washed a toxic blend of biological pathogens through the soils and into the vulnerable shaft of Well 5 and ultimately into Walkerton's Municipal drinking water system. The resulting contamination of the town's drinking water system lead to the deaths of seven people and caused thousands of others to fall ill. It is hoped that all those who visit this location will reflect upon the multiple causes of this tragedy and will be filled with a renewed reverence for the comprehensive stewardship of the waters that sustain us all.

MUNICIPALITY



OF BROCKTON



