

# Get Your Greed Out of Our Water

By Monica Guetre

Interestingly the Manitoba Government may be thinking of approving the Silica Sands fracking projects in eastern Manitoba despite all opposition from the water, geology and engineering core scientists that don't have their hands in the cookie jar and despite the majority of us seeing that jeopardizing our only source of drinking water and affecting our health and future generations to come is just wrong.

Despite laws that are supposed to protect us such as The Groundwater and Water Well Act that explicitly prohibits the mixing of sandstone aquifer water with carbonate aquifer water, The Water Protection Act that regulates our water quality standards, The Environment Act, and The Drinking Water Safety Act, the government see the little dollar signs from low hanging fruit as beneficial.

Shame on the Manitoba government for muzzling our tax funded government scientists and experts and putting us in the position of having to hire scientific experts and even further contemplating a class action against the province, and if need be, federal.

The majority of us who just want to protect our drinking water are slowly ripping off the duct tape the proponents have put forward in their plans. These pieces of duct tape are hiding the underlying quick fixes put forward by Sio Silca. Duct tape is only a quick fix and never addresses the fundamental problem.

Even the name change from CanWhite was an attempt to rebrand and convolute the mining company's plans for us. The root connotations of the proposal is still the same and slight of hand is just a parlour trick.

Common sense is not in abundance when a mining company such as Sio Silica wants to turn a fast buck.

Common sense says that if you drill and frack thousands of times over thousands of kilometres into our limestone and shale layers to remove the silica sand means that the aquifer is bye-bye. When there is no silica sand, there is no aquifer. No aquifer means, no drinking well water.

Common sense also leads us to the conclusion that when you disturb surrounding sediments found in sand, gravel and minerals from the carboniferous (limestone and dolomite) bedrock that these will be introduced into our drinking water in abundance. Additionally, some of those rock layers contain cancer causing minerals that will be introduced into the aquifer.

Even going back as far as 1995, there was thorough Manitoba Government study, "Groundwater in Manitoba: Hydrogeology, Quality Concerns, Management" that argues against this project. The report pointed out that, there is an "extensive network of discontinuities consisting of joints, bedding planes," and that "ground waters become increasingly saline with depth in most bedrock and some sand and gravel aquifers." Further, the study stated that saline increases from west to east in Manitoba. By fracturing the rock layers that are the naturally protecting the aquifer, an additional hazard is introduced - a higher saline level which could change access to clean well water throughout the eastern part of the province.

We need to stress there is not enough money to pay for that environmental disaster. There certainly is not enough money to pipe water from Lake of the Woods to every resident and business in eastern Manitoba

or deliver enough potable drinking water.

Our message to all mining companies, particularly this one, should be clear - the people in eastern Manitoba care deeply about their right to clean drinking water. We are not in the business of lining your pockets with cash so that you can go buy another bottle of sparkling water, pay for your au couture wardrobe or another vacation home. Your ability to smile ear-to-ear in the presence of your shareholders is not something we want to pay for with our quality of life.

Do you hear us now?