

2015 POLICY NCWC

- 2015.01 MAXIMIZE REMOVAL OF CHEMICALS & PHARMACEUTICALS FROM WASTEWATER BEFORE RELEASING WASTEWATER INTO THE ENVIRONMENT**
- 2015.02 MEAT AND CLIMATE CHANGE**
- 2015.03 MEDICALLY ASSISTED DEATH**
- 2015.04 REGULATION OF TOXINS AND BANNING OF ANTIBACTERIALS IN PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS**
- 2015.05 THE REGULATION OF ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES**
- 2015.06 REDUCTION IN SUGAR CONTENT IN PROCESSED FOOD, FRUIT DRINKS AND SODA POP**

Policy Update

- 2015.01PU MISSING AND MURDERED ABORIGINAL WOMEN**
- 2015.02PU ASBESTOS EXPOSURE A HEALTH HAZARD**

**2015.01 MAXIMIZE REMOVAL OF CHEMICALS & PHARMACEUTICALS FROM
WASTEWATER BEFORE RELEASING WASTEWATER INTO THE ENVIRONMENT**

- Whereas 1** technology has evolved to such a point that it now allows scientists to note extremely small amounts of substances in the water; and
- Whereas 2** there are increasing risks around the potability of water because of ingestion and elimination by an increasing number of people who rely on medication to deal with health issues; and
- Whereas 3** Environment Canada informed the Senate in February 2014 of the fact that 164 chemicals have been identified in trace amounts in the water of Canadian lakes and waterways for the first time in North America; and
- Whereas 4** a report on a river in Southern Ontario showed the feminization of fish due to trace amounts of hormones from birth control medications found in the water; and
- Whereas 5** the possible toxic cocktail caused by the infinite number of potential interactions between many compounds exacerbates the risks of toxicity; therefore be it
- Resolved 1** **that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that wastewater be treated to maximize the removal of toxic chemicals and pharmaceuticals before releasing wastewater into the environment; and be it further**
- Resolved 2** **that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to:**
a. require all communities to treat wastewater to maximize the removal of toxic chemicals and pharmaceuticals before releasing wastewater into the environment;
b. have the cost borne by the industry responsible for the toxin; and be it further
- Resolved 3** **that NCWC urge the Local and Provincial Councils of Women to lobby their respective levels of government to prioritize effective treatment of their community's wastewater to maximize the removal of toxic chemicals and pharmaceuticals before releasing wastewater into the environment; and be it further**
- Resolved 4** **that NCWC raise the issue with the International Council of Women so that the ICW/CIF can address the issue with its federates.**

PLAIN LANGUAGE FORMAT

Policy Statement

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopts as policy that wastewater be treated to maximize the removal of toxic chemicals and pharmaceuticals before releasing wastewater into the environment.

Request of Government

NCWC urges the Government of Canada to:

- a. require all communities to treat wastewater to maximize the removal of toxic chemicals and pharmaceuticals before releasing wastewater into the environment, and
- b. have the cost borne by the industry responsible for the toxin.

Request of Other Councils

NCWC urges the Local and Provincial Councils of Women to lobby their respective levels of government to prioritize effective treatment of their communities' wastewater to maximize the removal of toxic chemicals and pharmaceuticals before releasing wastewater into the environment.

NCWC will raise the issue with the International Council of Women so that the ICW/CIF can address the issue with its federates.

Rationale

Technology has evolved to such a point that it now allows scientists to note extremely small amounts of substances in the water. There are increasing risks around the potability of water because of ingestion and elimination by an increasing number of people who rely on medication to deal with health issues. Environment Canada informed the Senate in February 2014 of the fact that 164 chemicals have been identified in trace amounts in the water of Canadian lakes and waterways for the first time in North America; and a report on a river in Southern Ontario showed the feminization of fish due to trace amounts of hormones from birth control medications found in the water. The possible toxic cocktail caused by the infinite number of potential interactions between many compounds exacerbates the risks of toxicity.

2015-02 MEAT AND CLIMATE CHANGE

- Whereas 1** global populations are rising and tastes are shifting toward meat-heavy diets; and
- Whereas 2** raising more meat makes it necessary to bring more land into cultivation resulting in more deforestation and increased fertilizer use; and
- Whereas 3** increased methane emissions from livestock combined with the increased deforestation and fertilizer use will likely cause greenhouse gas emissions from food production to increase by almost 80% by 2050; and
- Whereas 4** reducing meat consumption, particularly beef, in favour of plant-based eating would help reduce environmental damage; therefore be it
- Resolved 1** **that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that Canadians be encouraged to eat less meat, particularly beef, as a means of reducing climate change; and be it further**
- Resolved 2** **that the NCWC urge the Government of Canada to encourage Canadians to eat less meat, particularly beef, by educating people on the beneficial effects of reducing meat consumption and of increasing the use of sustainable agriculture practices, i.e., less deforestation, fertilizer use and methane production and thereby reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.**

PLAIN LANGUAGE FORMAT

Policy Statement

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopts as policy that Canadians be encouraged to eat less meat, particularly beef, as a means of reducing climate change.

Request of Government

NCWC urges the Government of Canada to encourage Canadians to eat less meat, particularly beef, by educating people on the beneficial effects of reducing meat consumption and of increasing the use of sustainable agriculture practices, i.e., less deforestation, fertilizer use and methane production and thereby reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Rationale

Global populations are rising and tastes are shifting toward meat-heavy diets. Raising more meat makes it necessary to bring more land into cultivation resulting in more deforestation and increased fertilizer use.

Increased methane emissions from livestock combined with the increased deforestation and fertilizer use will likely cause greenhouse gas emissions from food production to increase by almost 80% by 2050. Reducing meat consumption, particularly beef, in favour of plant-based eating would help reduce environmental damage.

2015-03 MEDICALLY ASSISTED DEATH

Whereas 1 voluntary euthanasia and physician assistance to end one's life are illegal in Canada; and

Whereas 2 84% of Canadians support medically assisted death; and

Whereas 3 palliative care is sometimes not enough to reduce pain and maintain dignity, and

Whereas 4 jurisdictions where assisted death is legal, with safeguards, include the Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Montana, Oregon, Vermont Washington and Quebec; and

Whereas 5 since assisted death takes place in all jurisdictions even if illegal, it is better to have it legal with safeguards; therefore be it

Resolved 1 **that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that medically assisted dying comprised of voluntary euthanasia and doctor-assisted death, with safeguards, be legal and the person must be a consenting adult having reached the age of majority; and be it further**

Resolved 2 **that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to:**

- a. remove doctor-assisted death and voluntary euthanasia from the Criminal Code of Canada, and**
- b. set up safeguards through an Act permitting medically assisted death including the following criteria:**
 - i. the person must be terminally ill or have a life-limiting illness/condition**
 - ii. no person shall qualify solely because of age or disability**
 - iii the person must make two oral requests and one written request for assistance in dying, or by using alternate communication methods for those with verbal or physical challenges**
 - iv. two physicians or two senior health care professionals in cases where a person has no regular doctor must verify that the patient is capable, is acting voluntarily and has made an informed decision**
 - v. the person must not be suffering from a psychiatric or psychological disorder or depression causing impaired judgement or be developmentally disabled**
 - vi. the person must be informed of the feasible alternatives such as comfort care, hospice care and pain control**
 - vii. the person is given 15 days to rescind the request**
 - viii. ensure there are provisions for health care professionals to withdraw participation on personal, religious or ethical grounds.**

PLAIN LANGUAGE FORMAT

Policy Statement

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopts as policy that medically assisted dying comprised of voluntary euthanasia and doctor-assisted death, with safeguards, be legal and the person must be a consenting adult having reached the age of majority.

Request of Government

NCWC urges the Government of Canada to:

- a. remove doctor-assisted death and voluntary euthanasia from the Criminal Code of Canada, and
- b. set up safeguards through an Act permitting medically assisted death including the following criteria:
 - i. the person must be terminally ill or have a life-limiting illness/condition

- ii. no person shall qualify solely because of age or disability
- iii. the person must make two oral requests and one written request for assistance in dying, or by using alternate communication methods for those with verbal or physical challenges
- iv. two physicians or 2 senior health care professionals in cases where a person has no regular doctor must verify that the patient is capable, is acting voluntarily and has made an informed decision
- v. the person must not be suffering from a psychiatric or psychological disorder or depression causing impaired judgement or be developmentally disabled
- vi. the person must be informed of the feasible alternatives such as comfort care, hospice care and pain control
- vii. the person is given 15 days to rescind the request
- viii. ensure there are provisions for health care professionals to withdraw participation on personal, religious or ethical grounds

Rationale

Voluntary euthanasia and physician assistance to end one's life are illegal in Canada, but 84% of Canadians support medically assisted death.

Palliative care is sometimes not enough to reduce pain and maintain dignity.

Jurisdictions where assisted death is legal, with safeguards, include the Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Montana, Oregon, Vermont, Washington and Quebec.

Since assisted death takes place in all jurisdictions even if illegal, it is better to have it legal with safeguards.

2015-04 REGULATION OF TOXINS AND BANNING OF ANTIBACTERIALS IN PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

Whereas 1 the ingredients in personal care products are mostly untested and largely unregulated; and

Whereas 2 some of the toxic chemicals found in cosmetics are carcinogens, reproductive and developmental toxins, allergens, and endocrine disruptors, and antibacterial cosmetics may contribute to antibiotic resistance in bacteria; and

Whereas 3 there is a lack of data on the long-term or combined health effects of the majority of cosmetic ingredients; and

Whereas 4 contaminants and residues do not have to be listed on a label even if they are known to be harmful, and manufacturers are not required to disclose specific fragrance ingredients; and

Whereas 5 manufacturers are required to send Health Canada a list of ingredients but not until 10 days after a product goes on the market; therefore be it

Resolved 1 **that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy the regulation of toxins in personal care products and the banning of antibacterial cosmetics and soaps; and be it further**

Resolved 2 **that the NCWC urge the Government of Canada to:**

- a. test personal care products for their potential health effects before they are put on the market;**
- b. ban antibacterial cosmetics and soaps;**
- c. enact strict regulation that can be legally enforced for cosmetic ingredients, including contaminants and residues;**
- d. require manufacturers to disclose specific fragrance ingredients and list all product ingredients on the label;**
- e. require that labels warn of risk hazard with long term exposure.**

PLAIN LANGUAGE FORMAT

Policy Statement

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopts as policy the regulation of toxins in personal care products and the banning of antibacterial cosmetics and soaps.

Request of Government

NCWC urges the Government of Canada to:

- a. test personal care products for their potential health effects before they are put on the market;
- b. ban antibacterial cosmetics and soaps;
- c. enact strict regulation that can be legally enforced for cosmetic ingredients, including contaminants and residues;
- d. require manufacturers to disclose specific fragrance ingredients and list all product ingredients on the label;
- e. require that labels warn of risk hazard with long term exposure.

Rationale

The ingredients in personal care products are mostly untested and largely unregulated. Some of the toxic chemicals found in cosmetics are carcinogens, reproductive and developmental toxins, allergens, and endocrine disruptors, and antibacterial cosmetics may contribute to antibiotic resistance in bacteria.

There is a lack of data on the long-term or combined health effects of the majority of cosmetic ingredients. Contaminants and residues do not have to be listed on a label even if they are known to be harmful, and

manufacturers are not required to disclose specific fragrance ingredients. Manufacturers are required to send Health Canada a list of ingredients but not until 10 days after a product goes on the market.

2015-05 THE REGULATION OF ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

- Whereas 1** introduction of electronic-cigarettes has proliferated despite the fact that the sale of these products is currently not compliant with the Food and Drugs Act; and
- Whereas 2** no electronic smoking products have been granted market authorization in Canada; and
- Whereas 3** Health Canada is advising Canadians against the purchase or use of electronic smoking products, as these may pose health risks and have not been fully evaluated for safety, quality and efficacy by Health Canada; therefore be it
- Resolved 1** that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as a policy that
- a. the sale of e-cigarettes be banned until long-term research has been conducted and informed regulations are established;
 - b. ban the sale of electronic cigarettes to minors permanently; and be it further
- Resolved 2** that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to:
- a. ban the sale of e-cigarettes until long-term research has been conducted and informed regulations are established;
 - b. enforce the Food and Drugs Act related to the non-compliance of retailers of e-cigarettes;
 - c. fund research on the long-term effects of e-cigarettes;
 - d. ban the sale of electronic cigarettes to minors permanently; and be it further
- Resolved 3** that NCWC urge its federates to lobby their respective governments to establish informed regulations to reduce the health risks related to inhaling nicotine vapours and other noxious substances via electronic cigarettes as well as establish regulations for the distribution of electronic cigarettes; and be it further
- Resolved 4** that NCWC urge the International Council of Women to urge its federates to research the risks related to the distribution and use of electronic cigarettes in their jurisdictions in order to inform their respective governments about the importance of establishing regulations.

PLAIN LANGUAGE FORMAT

Policy Statement

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopts as a policy that

- a. the sale of e-cigarettes be banned until long-term research has been conducted and informed regulations are established;
- b. the sale of electronic cigarettes to minors be banned permanently.

Request of Government

NCWC urges the Government of Canada to:

- a. ban the sale of e-cigarettes until long-term research has been conducted and informed regulations are established;
- b. enforce the Food and Drugs Act related to the non-compliance of retailers of e-cigarettes;
- c. fund research on the long-term effects of e-cigarettes;
- d. ban the sale of electronic cigarettes to minors permanently.

Request of Councils

NCWC urges its federates to lobby their respective governments to establish informed regulations to reduce the health risks related to inhaling nicotine vapours and other noxious substances via electronic cigarettes as well as establish regulations for the distribution of electronic cigarettes.

NCWC urges the International Council of Women to urge its federates to research the risks related to the distribution and use of electronic cigarettes in their jurisdictions in order to inform their respective governments about the importance of establishing regulations.

Rationale

The introduction of electronic-cigarettes has proliferated despite the fact that the sale of these products is currently not compliant with the Food and Drugs Act. No electronic smoking products have been granted market authorization in Canada.

Health Canada is advising Canadians against the purchase or use of electronic smoking products, as these may pose health risks and have not been fully evaluated for safety, quality and efficacy by Health Canada.

2015-06 REDUCTION IN SUGAR CONTENT IN PROCESSED FOOD, FRUIT DRINKS AND SODA POP

- Whereas 1** foods containing excessive amounts of sugar, fructose and other caloric sweeteners contribute to the consumption by Canadians of unhealthy food causing a high incidence of unhealthy weight, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and dental problems; and
- Whereas 2** the cost of health care for Canadians suffering from these health problems continues to soar; and
- Whereas 3** Canada's food, fruit drink and soda industries continue to aggressively advertise their heavily sugar-sweetened products; and
- Whereas 4** a medium sized bottle of soda pop (571 ml) contains about one-quarter cup of sugar (or 57 grams) and a 250 ml fruit drink contains 30 grams of sugar; and
- Whereas 5** the amount of sugar in most heavily sweetened foods, fruit drinks and soda pop can be reduced by a minimum of one-third without a noticeable difference in taste; therefore be it
- Resolved 1** **that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that the amount of sugar, fructose and sweeteners in all heavily sweetened processed food, fruit/energy drinks and soda pop be reduced by a minimum of one-third; and be it further**
- Resolved 2** **that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to pass legislation to reduce, by a minimum of one-third, the amount of sugar, fructose and other sweeteners in all heavily sweetened processed food, fruit/energy drinks and soda pop.**

PLAIN LANGUAGE FORMAT

Policy Statement

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopts as policy that the amount of sugar, fructose and sweeteners in all heavily sweetened processed food, fruit/energy drinks and soda pop be reduced by a minimum of one-third.

Request of Government

NCWC urges the Government of Canada to pass legislation to reduce by a minimum of one-third, the amount of sugar, fructose and other sweeteners in all heavily sweetened processed food, fruit/energy drinks and soda pop.

Rationale

Foods containing excessive amounts of sugar, fructose and other caloric sweeteners contribute to the consumption by Canadians of unhealthy food causing a high incidence of unhealthy weight, diabetes, cardiovascular disease and dental problems. The cost of health care for Canadians suffering from these health problems continues to soar.

Canada's food, fruit drink and soda industries continue to aggressively advertise their heavily sugar-sweetened products.

A medium sized bottle of soda pop (571 ml) contains about one-quarter cup of sugar (or 57 grams) and a 250 ml fruit drink contains 30 grams of sugar. The amount of sugar in most heavily sweetened foods, fruit drinks and soda pop can be reduced by a minimum of one-third without a noticeable difference in taste.

2015-01PU MISSING AND MURDERED ABORIGINAL WOMEN

- Whereas 1** in 2012 the National Council of Women of Canada urged the Government of Canada to investigate and resolve unsolved cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women, bring perpetrators to justice and address systemic violence that affects aboriginal communities; and
- Whereas 2** Aboriginal women and girls continue to be disproportionately victims of violence according to Statistics Canada in relationship to their non-Aboriginal counterparts; and
- Whereas 3** Human Rights Watch Canada reports higher numbers than Statistics Canada because there is no current comprehensive data collection process and no precedent exists for the standardized collection of ethnicity data by police forces in Canada; and
- Whereas 4** homelessness and inadequate shelter are widespread problems facing Aboriginal families; and
- Whereas 5** the majority of Aboriginal people face dramatically lower incomes and a shortage of, and inadequately funded, culturally appropriate support services; and
- Whereas 6** the most frequent motive in homicides of Aboriginal women was “argument or quarrel” followed by “frustration, anger or despair”; and
- Whereas 7** the link between racial discrimination and violence against Aboriginal women has not yet been adequately acknowledged or addressed; therefore be it
- Resolved 1** **that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that all cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women be investigated effectively and immediately, and that the systemic violence against Aboriginal women be eliminated; and be it further**
- Resolved 2** **that NCWC urge the Government of Canada to immediately address the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women, including a national enquiry, and to work with the provinces, territories and with Aboriginal governments to fund and to implement programs that do the following:**
- a. enhance efforts on unresolved cases**
 - b. increase public awareness, including programs that address racism**
 - c. strengthen and improve data collection including DNA analysis of unidentified bodies**
 - d. include gender based analysis of all legislation and programs related to missing and murdered Aboriginal women**
 - e. focus on prevention efforts, specifically addressing the following:**
 - i. providing safe, secure, affordable housing**
 - ii. eliminating poverty**
 - iii. increasing access to services for Aboriginal women**
 - iv. restoring funding to Aboriginal women’s groups**
 - v. providing basic quality education within Aboriginal communities**
 - vi. supporting community capacity building**
 - vii providing antiviolence programs**

Plain Language Format

Policy Statement

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) will adopt as policy that all cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women be investigated effectively and immediately, and that the systemic violence against Aboriginal women be eliminated.

Request of Government

NCWC urges the Government of Canada to immediately address the issue of missing and murdered Aboriginal women including a national enquiry and to work with the provinces and territories, and with Aboriginal governments to fund and implement programs that do the following:

- a. enhance efforts on unresolved cases
- b. increase public awareness, including programs that address racism
- c. strengthen and improve data collection including DNA analysis of unidentified bodies
- d. include gender based analysis of all legislation and programs related to missing and murdered Aboriginal women
- e. focus on prevention efforts, specifically addressing the following:
 - i. providing safe, secure, affordable housing
 - ii. eliminating poverty
 - iii. increasing access to services for Aboriginal women
 - iv. restoring funding to Aboriginal women's groups
 - v. providing basic quality education within Aboriginal communities
 - vi. supporting community capacity building
 - vii. providing antiviolence programs

Rationale

In 2012 the National Council of Women of Canada urged the Government of Canada to investigate and resolve unsolved cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women, bring perpetrators to justice and address systemic violence that affects aboriginal communities.

Aboriginal women and girls continue to be disproportionately victims of violence according the Statistics Canada in relationship to their non-Aboriginal counterparts. Human Rights Watch Canada reports higher numbers of missing and murdered Aboriginal women than Statistics Canada because there is no current comprehensive data collection process and no precedent exists for the standardized collection of ethnicity data by police forces in Canada.

Homelessness and inadequate shelter are widespread problems facing Aboriginal families. The majority of indigenous people face dramatically lower incomes and a shortage of, and inadequately funded, culturally appropriate support services.

The most frequent motive in homicides of Aboriginal women was "argument or quarrel" followed by "frustration, anger or despair." The link between racial discrimination and violence against Aboriginal women has not yet been adequately acknowledged or addressed.

2015-02PU ASBESTOS EXPOSURE A HEALTH HAZARD

- Whereas 1** in 2010 the National Council of Women of Canada adopted as policy
- a. the inclusion of Chrysotile Asbestos in the Rotterdam Convention
 - b. a Ban on Mining and Exports of All Forms of Asbestos
 - c. the need for a Central Registry of Asbestos; and
- Whereas 2** Canada's last asbestos mine closed in 2011 and Canada no longer exports asbestos, but the importation of products containing asbestos is permitted; and
- Whereas 3** although some provinces have brought in stricter standards for exposure to asbestos, many thousands of Canadians have suffered and died from the effects of direct or secondary contact with asbestos, or asbestos residue, and asbestos is the top cause of workplace death; and
- Whereas 4** the World Health Organization has declared that no level of exposure to asbestos is acceptable; and
- Whereas 5** there is still no Central Registry of Asbestos, Canada has failed to support the inclusion of Chrysotile asbestos in the Rotterdam Convention, and Health Canada still fails to warn the public of the health risks for Canadians who are exposed to asbestos; therefore be it
- Resolved 1** **that the National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopt as policy that the importation and use of products containing asbestos not be allowed and that the public be made aware of the dangers of primary and secondary exposure to asbestos; and be it further**
- Resolved 2** **that the NCWC urge the Government of Canada to:**
- a. **establish a Central Registry of Asbestos**
 - b. **support the inclusion of Chrysotile asbestos in the Rotterdam Convention**
 - c. **ban the importation and use of products containing asbestos**
 - d. **alert the public to the dangerous nature of primary and secondary exposure to asbestos that spans several generations.**

Plain Language Format

Policy Statement

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC) adopts as policy that the importation and use of products containing asbestos not be allowed and that the public be made aware of the dangers of primary and secondary exposure to asbestos.

Request of Government

NCWC urges the Government of Canada to:

- a. establish a Central Registry of Asbestos
- b. support the inclusion of Chrysotile asbestos in the Rotterdam Convention
- c. ban the importation and use of products containing asbestos
- d. alert the public to the dangerous nature of primary and secondary exposure to asbestos that spans several generations.

Rationale

In 2010 the National Council of Women of Canada adopted as policy:

- a. the inclusion of Chrysotile Asbestos in the Rotterdam Convention
- b. a Ban on Mining and Exports of All Forms of Asbestos
- c. the need for a Central Registry of Asbestos.

Canada's last asbestos mine closed in 2011 and Canada no longer exports asbestos, but the importation of products containing asbestos is permitted. Although some provinces have brought in stricter standards for exposure to asbestos, many thousands of Canadians have suffered and died from the effects of direct or secondary contact with asbestos, or asbestos residue, and asbestos is the top cause of workplace death. The World Health Organization has declared that no level of exposure to asbestos is acceptable.

There is still no Central Registry of Asbestos, Canada has failed to support the inclusion of Chrysotile asbestos in the Rotterdam Convention, and Health Canada still fails to warn the public of the health risks for Canadians who are exposed to asbestos.