

For Immediate Release | January 26, 2017

## Thompson River Do Not Consume update

A health advisory for the Thompson River coal spill that occurred on Jan. 12 remains in place.

After the spill, Interior Health issued a Do Not Consume notification for areas downstream from the spill site, which is located seven kilometres south of Ashcroft. This advisory extends over a distance of 50 km downstream to where the Thompson River joins the Fraser River.

A Do Not Consume notification is issued when the water might not be safe for drinking. In this case, anyone who has concerns is advised to use alternative sources of water.

Testing for hydrocarbons and other contaminants in the river indicated these were non-detectable, which is encouraging. Risk to public health is believed to be minimal since there are no community water systems along this part of the river and few private water users.

On Jan. 24, Interior Health received information from industry that provided relevant information on additional testing for other potential chemical contaminants. A further update will be provided when the new set of test results is available.

Canadian Pacific Rail and its contractors continue a cleanup operation that involves removing cars and coal from the incident site, but the process will take more time. The B.C. Ministry of Environment is monitoring progress with the cleanup.

In the meantime, boom fencing is installed between the spill site and the river bank to prevent additional coal from entering the river. As well, a boom with absorbent material is placed in the water near the site to capture any chemicals that may be released into the river from coal along the shoreline.

Interior Health will continue to work with the Ministry of Environment and Canadian Pacific Rail to ensure the quality and safety of Thompson River water.

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