SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL OVERVIEW

Objectives of this Report

The purpose of this report is to introduce Canadian firms to the market for environmental products and services in New York State for solid waste, hazardous waste and air pollution. Driven by environmental legislation and by environmental crises like the contamination of the Love Canal neighborhood in Niagara Falls, New York, the environmental industry has been one of the state's fastest growing economic sectors since the 1980s.

The growth of the sector has slowed somewhat in the 1990s because some federal and state contracts for remediation of hazardous waste sites had largely been let out and because of the recession of 1990-92. Nevertheless, industry observers continued to project rapid growth in several segments, such as air pollution control, medical waste management, the environmental restoration of military installations, and materials recovery facilities (for handling recycled materials). The state still offers many expanding markets for innovative Canadian companies, particularly those that can respond to specialized industry niches.

New York State continues to be at the forefront of the environmental industry in the United States because of the state's tradition of progressive legislation in environmental matters. Indeed, the state leads the way in several categories of U.S. environmental regulation, such as controls over the engineering and design of landfills.

Scope and Approach

This report summarizes New York opportunities in three major segments of the environmental industry: solid waste, hazardous waste, and air pollution.

Solid waste consists of non-liquid, non-soluble materials ranging from municipal garbage to industrial waste. It includes sewage sludge, agricultural refuse, demolition wastes and mining residues. Medical waste is classed as solid waste. Section 2 of this report examines the opportunities in New York for the solid waste segment of the environmental industry (excluding hazardous solid waste).

Hazardous wastes refer to byproducts that can pose a substantial threat to human health or the environment when improperly managed. Typically the wastes are ignitable, corrosive, chemically reactive, or toxic. Section 3 describes opportunities in the hazardous waste segment. The section focuses on solid hazardous waste; except for general summary information, the section excludes aqueous and air-borne hazardous waste.