



Eliminating dangerous waste

Canada, working in co-operation with other governments, is exercising increasingly stricter control on the release and disposal of pollutants. The Niagara River Toxics Management Plan (a joint Canada-U.S. initiative), for example, aims at cutting in half, by 1996, the amount of persistent toxic substances dumped on both sides of the river. The government has announced that PCBs (poly-chlorinated biphenyls, a group of extremely toxic synthetic chemicals) will be completely eliminated from Canadian territory by 1993.

Environmentally Friendly Products Program

The federal department Environment Canada has launched the Environmentally Friendly Products Program to identify products that conserve energy, are recycled or recyclable, are biodegradable and are free of ozone-depleting substances. Companies whose products qualify will be able to display a logo certifying that these are "environmentally friendly."

Energy

Energy production is not without consequences for the environment. Fossil fuel use, dam construction, offshore drilling, transporting of oil by sea, automobile exhaust and nuclear waste disposal can all have an adverse effect on people's surroundings.

Canada is trying to fully integrate environmental factors in its energy policy. At first, emphasis was on greater efficiency and energy savings with subsidies for such initiatives as improving home insulation. In 1985, Canadians consumed 58 million fewer barrels of oil than in 1973 and thus avoided releasing 385 000 tons of sulphur dioxide. By improving current technologies it is estimated that energy demand can be further reduced by 20 to 50 per cent. The federal government is also working on perfecting energy substitutes, combustion techniques and techniques for processing coal to minimize sulphur emissions.