

THE MATOUSH PROJECT

The Matoush project is a \$50-million uranium underground exploration program. It is a highly controlled and regulated operation that is safe for workers and the local population. The underground exploration program will create approximately 160 new jobs mostly within the Mistissini and Chibougamau communities and will have a positive impact on the local economy.

TRANSPORT OF NUCLEAR SUBSTANCES

For over 60 years (uranium transportation began in the early 1950s), uranium in the form of “Yellowcake” has been trucked from Saskatchewan mines to Ontario and Quebec (Port of Montreal). Over the course of those years, no major incidents have been recorded and there has been no impact on the environment or the local communities. This success is mainly attributable to Canadian experience as well as regulations for the transport of nuclear substances which contribute to the protection of people, goods and the environment.

Did you know?

- About twenty million consignments containing radioactive materials are routinely transported worldwide annually on public roads, railways and ships.
- There has never been any transportation accident which led to serious radiological consequence.
- The radiological risk of “Yellowcake” is really low because of the low toxicity of the powder.

WHAT IS YELLOWCAKE?

The final product obtained from the exploitation of a mine is a slightly radioactive concentrate of uranium called “Yellowcake”. “Yellowcake” is listed in the dangerous substances list; however, transportation risks are very low.

SECURITY MEASURES

Since 1961, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) keeps updated its *Regulations for the safe transport of radioactive material* in order to provide a regulation frame, common to the diverse national authorities around the world.

In Canada, the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) and Transport Canada are responsible for the elaboration and application of regulations relative to the transport of nuclear substances. The essence of the Canadian Regulation can be found in the *Regulations for the safe transport of radioactive material* and the *Packaging and Transport of Nuclear Substances Regulations*.

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PACKAGING

Canadian Regulation is based on the fundamental principle under which every radioactive material must be adequately packed in order to protect it in normal transportation conditions as well as in case of accidents. Furthermore, since security relies mainly on the container in which it is packed, Canadian Regulation has really high performance standards to guarantee the quality of those containers.

In addition to determining the appropriate packaging type for each nuclear substance, the Canadian Regulation defines and imposes that labels and plates appear on the containers and on transportation in order to indicate the type of dangerous material being transported and the related danger.

EMERGENCY PLAN

Every person that transports radioactive material must have in his possession an expedition document that includes all the information on the expeditor, the material being transported and the Emergency Response Assistance Plan (ERAP) in case of accidents. The ERAP is mandatory for “Yellowcake” transportation and must be approved by Transport Canada.

In case of an accident leading to a “Yellowcake” discharge, the producer must, as stipulated in the ERAP, send an emergency team to pick up the “Yellowcake” and clean up the surroundings to prevent contamination.

TRAINING

Every own that handles, asks for transport or transports dangerous material must have the appropriate training and must hold a training certificate. All the implicated people surrounding transportation of nuclear material then hold the necessary knowledge and competence to ensure the highest security level.

APPLICATION OF REGULATION

The inspectors of Transport Canada make sure the rules of transportation and packaging of radioactive matter are applied and respected. They have the authority to stop any practice that could be harmful to the public’s security.

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LINKS

Transportation of Dangerous Goods Regulations

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/tdg/clear/tofc.htm>

Packaging and Transport of Nuclear Substances Regulations

<http://lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/Regulation/S/SOR-2000-208.pdf>

Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material (2005 Edition)

– IAEA

http://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/publications/PDF/Pub1225_web.pdf

Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission - Packaging and Transport of Nuclear Substances

<http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/about/regulated/packaging/index.cfm>

Transport Canada – Transportation of Dangerous Goods

<http://www.tc.gc.ca/tdg/tdg.htm>

■ For more information, please contact Strateco at: avezina@bbhgm.com

Strateco believes that sustainable development means caring for the environment at every stage of exploration and production, actively involving the Cree community in the project, ensuring the safety and health of our employees and providing safe and clean energy for the future.