



No thanks! Nunatsiavut rebuffs request to talk about mercury in Lake Melville

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Researchers aboard a Nunatsiavut government vessel check out sediment samples taken from Lake Melville, in Labrador. (CBC)

The Nunatsiavut Government is rejecting calls from the province to sit down and work through issues around methyl mercury in Lake Melville.

- [Mercury levels from Muskrat Falls pose threat, says environmental panelist](#)
- [Muskrat Falls prompts Harvard research on mercury levels](#)

Labrador Inuit are concerned that damming Muskrat Falls will lead to increased mercury levels in the lake, making fish there unsafe to eat.

Nalcor has said the rise in mercury levels will be insignificant.

Provincial Environment Minister Perry Trimper had hoped to bring the two sides together to discuss Harvard University research, commissioned by Nunatsiavut, that seems to bolster their concerns.

However, Nunatsiavut's Lands and Natural Resources Minister Darryl Shiwak said Friday there's nothing to discuss.

Speaking from Rigolet, Shiwak said the data from Harvard has been presented to the provincial and federal governments.

"It really shows that there will be some really substantial effects downstream," he said. "Putting us in a room with them [Nalcor] will not really help this issue along any further."

Can't compromise health

Shiwak said Nalcor has told Nunatsiavut that they will only listen to the government regulators.

"What the provincial government wishes to do by putting us in a room together is for us to come to some mutually agreed position," he told the Labrador Morning Show. "We cannot do that because that's just compromising Inuit health and rights down the stream."

Shiwak said the data should speak for itself.

"It is the only peer-reviewed scientific data out there, no matter what Nalcor says."

Nalcor has said it will issue advisories if mercury levels spike from time to time.

The Nunatsiavut government wants the area cleared of organic matter.

"Not just the trees, not just the vegetation, but the soil. Everything has to come out," Shiwak said.

"That won't solve all the issues, but it will be a huge first step."

He called on the provincial minister to make his decision on the matter.

"Because once you flood, it's too late," he said.

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