

B. C. TAP WATER ALLIANCE

Caring for, Monitoring, and Protecting
British Columbia's Community Water
Supply Sources

Email – info@bctwa.org

Website – www.bctwa.org



September 26, 2014

Media Release

POLLEYGATE: WHAT DID THEY KNOW, AND WHEN DID THEY KNOW IT?

Vancouver: This morning, [the Vancouver Sun reported critical information](#) from a 2010 inspection report about a “tension crack” in the Mount Polley mine’s Tailings dam, which was identified to be near to the source of the breach of the August 4, 2014 disaster.

Eager to know more about a pressing matter that has drawn international attention and triggered widespread interest and concern about the deregulated mining industry and its practices, the government refused to release subsequent annual inspection reports from 2011 to 2013 about the Mount Polley Tailings Storage Facility (TSF) to the Vancouver Sun, information which was to have been submitted by Imperial Metals mining company to the Williams Lake public library and other stakeholders. And, according to New Democratic Party Environment critic Spenser Herbert, the government has also refused to release public documents to the Opposition Party about the Mount Polley disaster, meant to stall any public issuance until January 2014.

The Vancouver Sun obtained the information about the “tension crack” at the Williams Lake public library, found in an Appendix section of the 2010 *Annual Environmental and Reclamation Report* published by Imperial Metals, an annual requirement specified in the Ministry of Mines Permit (M-200) for the copper mine since its operations began in 1997. Curiously, in the subsequent three Annual Reports filed by Imperial Metals, 2011-2013, the specific Appendixes dealing with the TSF, and any further discussions and reviews about the structural integrity of the tailings dam, are all conveniently **‘missing:**’ *“Appendix M - 2011 Annual Tailings Storage Facility Inspection (to be distributed in May 2012);” “The TSF and associated works were inspected in 2012 by AMEC Engineering. AMEC will complete the Annual Review in May 2013 and it will be available as Appendix L;” and “The TSF and associated works were inspected in 2013 by AMEC ... The completed “2013 As-Built and Annual Review Report” will be provided to MEM under separate cover from this report.”*

“The Vancouver Sun has possibly unearthed a key clue about the Mount Polley tailings disaster, while also exposing the extreme unwillingness of the government to release previously published public documents. Why the Tailings Storage Facility documents are missing in Imperial Metals’ annual reports from 2011-2013 are a complete and utter mystery,” said Will Koop, BC Tap Water Alliance Coordinator. “While the government’s review of the Mount Polley mine disaster continues, it must immediately release these and all other reports to the public, to be posted on a website, so that we can investigate and decide for ourselves, thereby making the same critical conclusions as the appointed panel may ultimately deliver.”