

To: Mayor and Council
From: Ontario Stone, Sand & Gravel Association
Re: Gravel Facts in Ontario
Date: January 26, 2021

The Ontario Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (OSSGA) represents the producers and suppliers of aggregate resources – stone, sand and gravel – in Ontario.

An important part of our mandate is to correct misinformation about the industry that often finds its way into the media and the community at large. ‘NIMBY’ groups present themselves as watchdogs of industry, but all too often offer observations and recommendations which meet their own agendas – and most important, do not reflect the broader community and business interests. That said, OSSGA understands that the issues around the location and operation of pits and quarries raises questions with your constituents. We want to be here to help you answer those questions, and address assertions which are not substantiated by the facts.

As an example, a recent NIMBY report stated that aggregate poses a threat to Ontario’s important agriculture resources. The reality is that loss of agriculture because of aggregate is not accurate. Of the 4.9 million ha of prime agricultural land in southern Ontario, only 0.7% contains a licensed aggregate operation. And much of that land is returned to an agricultural use after extraction. In addition, aggregate is an essential part of the agri-food system – necessary for farm structures, farming road construction, soil amendments, bedding, drainage, etc.

The same report suggested that because some aggregate companies are operated by multi-nationals, aggregate does not contribute significantly to local economies. The reality is that the aggregate industry in Ontario, like many industries, consists of a small number of large multinational companies, large Canadian firms, and more than 200 medium and small sized operations that range in size from 20 sites to a single sand or gravel pit. Regardless of ownership, all sites hire local workers and supply the product that generates **hundreds of thousands of jobs** in the construction industry in Ontario.

There are also comments circulating regarding haul routes, road repair and the aggregate levy that require correcting. In Ontario, the aggregate industry is the only industry to pay a levy. Currently, that levy is 20.8 ¢ per tonne which equates to more than \$20 million for all of Ontario. The majority of these funds are distributed to local municipalities for infrastructure spending.



In most municipalities, haul routes are located on Regional Roads – which have been built for the purpose of hauling goods. In Ontario, there are more than 200,000 trucks on the roads every day. Only 3% of these trucks are aggregate trucks. The rest carry the 90% of goods that are delivered by truck in this province. Aggregate producers want to be good neighbours and have worked with the Top Aggregate Producing Municipalities of Ontario (TAPMO) to help increase the levy. In addition, producers often work with municipalities on haul road repairs and emergency response services. In many cases in Township's throughout Ontario where entrances are located on Township roads, the producers paid to upgrade the roads to accommodate heavy trucks at their own expense.

These are just some examples of misinformation. OSSGA offers many resources to help understand the aggregate industry.

Our [videos](#) are a great place to start to learn about the industry. You will discover how we all use aggregate – every day – including the individuals critical of the industry! How, in order to build the communities and meet the growth demands of tomorrow, we must look for new supplies of high-quality aggregate today. You'll learn about the environmental due diligence that producers undertake to ensure the industry is safe, clean and responsible. And you'll see for yourself the amazing rehabilitation efforts that have resulted in some of Ontario's most beautiful landscapes – as well as innovative new land uses and agricultural projects.

If you're looking for more, check out our [GravelFacts.ca/resources](https://www.gravelfacts.ca/resources) page for brochures on topics including water management, dust-mitigation, blasting and more information on rehabilitation.

Finally, our new brochure – [The Life Cycle of a Pit or Quarry](#) – walks you through the operation of a pit or quarry from site planning through to rehabilitation. The smartest, most environmentally responsible consideration when mining for stone, sand or gravel is to ensure that the gravel pit is located as close to market as possible.

OSSGA would be delighted to answer any questions about the aggregate industry in Ontario. Please do not hesitate to reach out to OSSGA's Executive Director, Norm Cheesman at 647-727-8774 or by email at ncheesman@ossiga.com.

Our industry wants to work in partnership with communities, to bring the aggregate that we all use every single day of our lives - to where it is needed in the most environmentally and economically way possible.

We won't see you in person at ROMA but hope to see some of you at OSSGA's virtual booth!