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## Environment lawyer joins cleanup push

By **CHIP MARTIN**

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One of Canada's leading environmental lawyers has joined the push to get the federal government to clean up Port Stanley harbour.

Dianne Saxe has begun advising activist Dan McNeil, who is concerned Transport Canada will foist the contaminated harbour onto the municipality of Central Elgin without cleaning or dredging it.

Saxe appears in the latest edition of the Best Lawyers in Canada in the Specialty of Environmental Law and has advised municipalities, property owners and Pollution Probe and conducted environmental training programs for local governments and businesses.

Her willingness to enter the fray was hailed by McNeil as "a huge step forward in ensuring some positive outcomes for Port Stanley and for the region. Normally the expertise we require is difficult to obtain and terribly expensive."

But Saxe offered her services freely after a call from McNeil.

"Now, we are fortunate enough to have one of the best and toughest legal advisers on the side of the community," he said.

"A while ago a local expert in the environmental field told me that if you are fortunate enough to get Dianne Saxe's legal help against Transport Canada, 'she has the ability to maul them.' I would like to see that."

Studies have shown the harbour sediment, groundwater and adjacent land are laced with mercury, lead, polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), arsenic, toluene, selenium and heavy metals.

Transport Canada has been locked in secret divestiture talks with Central Elgin for years while the only deep water port on the north shore of Lake Erie has fill ed with silt.

Saxe, based in Toronto, has strong views she shared with The Free Press that can be found in an accompanying question-and-answer session.

Chip Martin is a Free Press reporter.

chip.martin@sunmedia.ca

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