

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### Study shows Ontario residents support certification of pits and quarries

Toronto, ON, September 13, 2011: A survey released today shows Ontarions are in favour of a certification system for responsibly sourced aggregate materials. The Ipsos Reid survey, which is available at <http://www.ipsos-na.com/news-polls/>, found that 85% of respondents believe that a voluntary certification system that recognizes environmentally and socially responsible pits and quarries is a good idea.

“As a leading supplier of aggregate in the GTA and adjacent municipalities, we find these results affirm that a certification program like SERA would be supported. These results clearly indicate that by and large communities recognize that aggregate operations are important for the economy and for building strong, livable communities. The results also imply that the aggregate planning and approval process would be less confrontational if a certification system was being adhered to”, said Andrea Bourrie, Director, Planning & Regulatory Affairs, Holcim Canada Inc.

For residents who live near pits and quarries it may appear that operators have few external checks to ensure their practices meet community expectations. A third-party audited certification system that promotes world-class best management practices is seen to go a long way towards relieving these concerns. Although 37% of respondents to the IPSOS survey initially felt the aggregate industry is “often reckless and irresponsible” over 85% felt they would be more supportive of an operation in their municipality if there were a voluntary certification system in place.

In June 2011, Socially and Environmentally Responsible Aggregate (SERA) released a set of *Draft* Standards that propose voluntary operating procedures that would allow operators a third-party assessment of their social and environmental practices. These standards are currently being reviewed and revised by a broad group of stakeholders including municipalities, environmental and community groups and the aggregate industry. As a not-for-profit organization developing voluntary certification for responsible aggregate sites, SERA is encouraged by these findings.

“We are all very heartened by these objective findings. They certainly confirm that SERA is on the right track. But I think we can infer that the public is also challenging us to get on with it,” said Michael Fenn, Chair, SERA Founding Board. “People are familiar with the successes of third-party certification in other sectors, from forestry and fisheries, to agricultural products and Ontario wines. They see certification of the construction materials we need and use every day – stone, sand and gravel – as a logical next step in letting consumers choose products that protect our environment and benefit our communities”.

The survey additionally found that the majority of respondents (85%) believed aggregate operations to be good job and revenue generators for the local communities that host them, but many (65%) were also concerned that they create too much noise,

truck traffic and damage to the community where they reside. Along with environmental impacts SERA intends to address social issues of this type.

For the survey (<http://www.ipsos-na.com/news-polls/>) a sample of 855 adults living in Ontario from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and political composition to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. This survey was not sponsored or paid for by any person or organization; it was constructed by Ipsos for the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) meeting of August 22, 2011 to provide insights to delegates during a presentation panel on responsible sourcing of aggregates.

**About SERA ([www.seracanada.ca](http://www.seracanada.ca))**

Socially and Environmentally Responsible Aggregate (SERA) is a not-for-profit organization that will create, administer and promote widespread support for certification of responsibly sourced construction materials. Its initial focus is on establishing a voluntary certification system to promote responsibly sourced aggregate materials in Ontario, offering operators an innovative way to demonstrate their efforts to recognize the social and environmental expectations of the local community.

**About Ipsos ([www.ipsos.com](http://www.ipsos.com))**

Ipsos is a leading global survey-based market research company, owned and managed by research professionals. Ipsos helps interpret, simulate, and anticipate the needs and responses of consumers, customers, and citizens around the world.

Ipsos member companies offer expertise in advertising, customer loyalty, marketing, media, and public affairs research, as well as forecasting, modeling, and consulting. Ipsos has a full line of custom, syndicated, omnibus, panel, and online research products and services, guided by industry experts and bolstered by advanced analytics and methodologies. The company was founded in 1975 and has been publicly traded since 1999. In 2010, Ipsos generated global revenues of €1.140 billion (\$1.6 billion U.S.).

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