

## APGO Networking Event in Barrie

October 19, 2017

5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Churchill Ballroom North

Holiday Inn Barrie Hotel & Conference Centre

20 Fairview Road, Barrie, ON

Online Registration: <https://www.apgo.net/apgo-events>

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### Guest Speaker

**Dr. Jennifer McKelvie, Ph.D., P.Geo.**



Dr. Jennifer McKelvie is a Professional Geoscientist at the Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO). Her research and development work focuses on microbiologically influenced corrosion of used nuclear fuel containers in collaboration with several Canadian universities. While working for NWMO, she has gained extensive experience explaining technical concepts to public audiences including national, regional and local aboriginal organizations, as well as municipal community liaison committees.

Her work at NWMO triggered a passion for community engagement, which compelled her to use her geoscientific expertise to advocate for infrastructure projects in Scarborough. Her volunteer activities include serving as founding Chair of the Scarborough Community Renewal Organization, as President of her local community association and as a citizen board member on the Toronto and Regional Conservation Authority.

### The Role of Geoscientists in Evidence-Based Decision Making

As geoscientists, we have an obligation to provide sound technical advice to protect our environment, access natural resources and construct infrastructure in the best locations. We also are called upon to provide accessible geotechnical information to residents to support their participation in the decision-making processes that shape their communities. Accordingly, geoscientists have a unique leadership role in this collaborative process of encouraging responsible development.

The Nuclear Waste Management Organization (NWMO) has a multi-year process to find a willing and informed community to host a deep geological repository for used nuclear fuel, and it has led its effort through its geoscience professionals. Since the environmental assessment will need to demonstrate both technical feasibility for the project, as well as social acceptance of the project within the selected community, NWMO geoscientists often interact with the public at community engagement events to share their research. It has also been a rewarding opportunity for the NWMO technical staff, as they have gained a better understanding of the larger considerations of the communities involved the site selection process.

From this experience, it is clear that geoscientists should be encouraged to also share their expertise with our local communities and participate in public consultations about local infrastructure projects. Whether it's transit, waterfront protection or waste management, we can attend, or host, public events to help our communities make decisions based on facts and not fear. This talk will share the perspectives of a geoscientist who has used technical expertise to enrich community volunteer work.