

## Correspondence from Ivan Bateman

Ms. Meekin,

I would like to submit the following communication for the consideration by the Peterborough County/City Waste Management Steering Committee.

Mayor & Councillors,

On July 16th The Examiner published a letter of mine which responded to a letter from Mr. Ed McLellan of July 6th.

His letter read as follows:

### Durham takes lead in energy from waste

The decision by Durham Region on June 25 to construct a modern energy from waste plant in Clarington elevates Durham's recognized achievements as Ontario's waste management leader to national status. In partnership with York Region, the new Durham EFW plant will provide the cornerstone for an advanced, fully integrated waste management system.

Durham's new system satisfies, rather beautifully, the three principles of sustainable development: protecting human health and the environment in which we live; conservation of valuable resources; and minimizing health environmental and economic liabilities for future generations.

The new EFW plant will convert post-recycled trash, generally referred to as residual waste; to green energy and allow Durham to annually divert 140,000 metric tonnes of waste from contaminating landfills. The plan is to progressively expand the annual capacity of the EFW plant to 400,000 tonnes and at full capacity, produce over 50 megawatts of clean, base load electrical energy and an equivalent amount of energy in the form of thermal heat for district

heating.

The York/Durham decision will have a profound and favourable impact on waste management systems throughout Ontario and Canada. We applaud Durham's competent engineers and waste management team who so carefully and competently researched modern waste disposal technology, and applied this knowledge to the selection of energy from waste.

ED. K. McLELLAN  
Firwood Crescent

I replied as follows:

Re: "Durham takes lead in energy from waste" (June 6)

Mr. McLellan's glowing praise for the Councillors and staff of Durham Region for deciding to build a garbage incinerator overlooks another side to the project.

Firstly, the decision by Council under the guidance of its unelected chairman, did not receive unanimous approval. The final vote was 16 in favour and 12 against. Nine of the "for" votes were from representatives of the most distant parts of the Region. Three others were from the host community of Clarington who are expecting to receive generous rebates for their lower tier government.

Secondly, the energy to be developed by burning 140,000 tonnes of garbage is exactly 13.6 megawatts ( or less than one half of one percent of Darlington Nuclear Station output). For this power, the incinerator will produce 37,800 tonnes of ash with varying degrees of toxicity. This material requires a lined landfill for disposal. Since there is no such landfill in Durham Region, it will be trucked to New York State for disposal.

In addition, the incinerator will produce 127,000 tonnes of Carbon Dioxide, a green house gas, and sundry other particulates of both known and unknown toxicity. The energy produced can hardly be called "green", and as coal fired generation plants are phased out, it will not be credited with pollution offsets from those plants.

Thus, the garbage does not simply disappear, but is converted to forms that will be distributed far and wide. Peterborough is only 60 km downwind from the point source in Clarington. We are already subjected to lowered air quality from power stations in the midwest U.S.A. during many summer days. This incinerator will add yet another "straw to the camel's back".

Finally, although not directly of concern to us in Peterborough, this adventure will cost the citizens of Durham Region at least \$250,000,000 which will be partly funded by the Federal Gas Tax Rebate. The Region has the poorest public transportation system in the GTA and thus there will be no funds for improving service or helping to reduce the use of the CO2 producing private automobiles.

There are many other objections that can be made but I will not summarize them here. It is too bad that Mr. McLellan was not present to hear the 140 wide-ranging deputations from Durham citizens to the Regional Council's two meetings in June. These covered a wide range of economic, technical, health, and environmental problems connected with the project. He might have been a little less enthusiastic, and more cautious in his endorsement of incineration as the preferred solution to Durham's waste disposal.

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I wish to add that my concern is relevant insofar as the incinerator will be located only 60 km. from my Peterborough home. The prevailing winds from that direction frequently bring pollution from the U.S. that causes local smog alerts. The projected incinerator will send an additional load of nano-particles and CO<sub>2</sub> in this direction.

Ivan Bateman