

Oct 5/07

Questioning edits made by Dr. Lesbia Smith to her August 20/07 - *Energy from Waste Facility in the Region of Durham - Précis*

In her original Précis (August 20, 2007), which can be found on the [DEW](http://www.durhamenvironmentwatch.org/Incinerator%20Files/Medical%20Officer%20energyFromWasteReport.pdf) website at:
<http://www.durhamenvironmentwatch.org/Incinerator%20Files/Medical%20Officer%20energyFromWasteReport.pdf> - Bottom of page 4, Dr. Smith wrote:

"It should be noted that these particles are emissions of concern primarily from hazardous waste incineration so that it would be prudent to ensure that residual wastes are free of those components which are associated with toxic nanoparticles formation (e.g., plastics) before the waste is destroyed in an EFW facility."

The edited version, on the Durham Region Website -
<http://www.region.durham.on.ca/departments/health/pub/energyFromWastePrecis.pdf>:

The paragraph above has been removed completely, and replaced with the following paragraph at the top of page 5:

"It should be noted that these ultrafine and nanoparticles are emissions of concern from hazardous waste incineration, as opposed to municipal EFW facilities. 1 Dioxins are produced de novo from incineration regardless of what is burned. Plastics are destroyed completely by combustion and any recombination into polychlorinated aromatic compounds that occurs in the burning process is dealt with in the emissions control technology. The inference that plastics per se are a source of nanoparticles is incorrect. Limiting plastics in general is not a prerequisite of the incineration technology."

There is no notation that this change has been made - the original paragraph just disappeared from the Précis and the new one appeared. The version on the DEW website was the original, and the one on the Durham Region website is the changed version (perhaps because of those questions about plastics at the JWMC meeting?).

When I questioned Dr. Smith at the Bowmanville PIC on Oct. 3, during the Q&A session, I asked if she is now saying there are no dioxins or other hazardous compounds produced from the burning of MSW (Municipal Solid Waste). I also asked if she was now saying it is SAFE to burn plastics in the waste stream and that doing so will NOT allow dioxins or other hazardous compounds to adhere to any microfine or nanoparticles emitted from the stacks?

Dr. Smith declined to answer my questions. Her reply to me was that this is not her area of expertise, and she turned the questions over to someone else on the panel (an engineer, I believe, who also didn't answer my questions satisfactorily).

My question now is, if it was not her "area of expertise", then why did she make the statements in her report? She is being considered an expert by Dr. Kyle, Durham Region Council and Staff and Clarington Council. If she cannot or will not answer straightforward questions on what she wrote in her report, why did she write what she originally did? And why did she make those changes? I find this troubling.

Kerry Meydam
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