

September 11, 2007

To the Councillors of the Municipality of Clarington:

I don't even know where to start. I am in shock. I still cannot believe that Durham Region is looking at incineration as the solution to the area's garbage woes – and that the Municipality of Clarington might be a willing (or unwilling) host to this technology.

Last week, for the first time ever, I took part in a civil protest. As part of the protest against incineration in Durham Region, I signed a petition, marched outside city hall (in Clarington) with a sign and joined the group when they entered Chambers to sit in on your Council meeting. I have never done anything like this before moving to Courtice (a year ago).

I will admit that I did not to the end of the meeting (I hear that you were up until 2 a.m.). I did listen to the first two speakers and to the questions that you posed at the end of their presentations. Before the meeting, I also read the fact sheets and other materials provided by the Durham Environment Watch (www.durhamenvironmentwatch.org) so that I would be as informed as possible. (I have attached a fact sheet for your information.)

Beyond all of the facts and figures of the incineration issue, I have found myself to be deeply concerned about the process of both choosing this 'alternative' and of choosing locations in Clarington as the potential host sites. It sounds to me like the processes have been very flawed, as pointed out in the report by Steven Rowe. I also came away with a strong sense of a process that has been very rushed, very secretive and very political ... which to me is almost as alarming as the issue of incineration itself.

Indeed, when my friends and I discussed the meeting afterwards, we all came away feeling a little bit patronized. The underlying message seemed to be that if only the public could *understand*, then they would naturally support incineration. We all felt a bit insulted by the Council's continuous reference to using 'simple language' so 'the public could understand.' We *do* understand and that is why we are making ourselves heard.

Perhaps most disturbing of all is that I don't trust the information to come out of this process un-manipulated. For example, the second speaker presented the findings of a Generic Human Health & Ecological Assessment. Although toxins would be released into an already polluted environment, the authors found incineration to be an 'acceptable risk.' However (and this is a big however), the presenter stressed that a truly valid risk assessment could not be made *until after the site and technology are chosen*. I couldn't shake the feeling, based on a follow-up question by Councillor Mary Novak, that the finding of "acceptable risk" would be emphasized while mention of the very vital disclaimer of location and technology would be conveniently ignored. Please prove me wrong!

What it all comes down to for me can be summed up in one word: poisons. Burning garbage will put poisons into our air. Poisons in the air mean poisons in our bodies and poisons in our environment. In this day and age, with all that we have learned about global warming and pollution and toxins and health – there is no 'acceptable risk.'

We are already carrying poisons in our bodies. Just this past week, it was reported that Liberal Leader Dalton McGuinty, Conservative Leader John Tory and NDP Leader Howard Hampton each have more than 40 different toxins and pollutants in their blood. In a study last year of seven children and six adults an average of 32 chemicals were found in the parents and 23 in the children. Do we really want to add to that contingent when there are other viable solutions (please refer to the attached fact sheet)?

Please, say **no** to incineration – whether in Clarington or any other part of Durham Region.

Sincerely,

Kristin D. McKinnon-Rutherford
Courtice

PS Maybe we could start with improving the recycling system in Durham Region. Items recycled by the City of Kawartha Lakes (*total* population 72,000) but not by Durham Region include:

- Styrofoam (cups, plates, white fast food containers, meat trays, egg cartons)
- Plastic bags and film
- Pie plates, take out containers, baking pans, frozen food trays and clean aluminium foil
- Wrapping paper
- Wax coated boxes such as frozen food boxes and ice cream cartons
- Textiles

The City of Kawartha Lakes also recycles all items have one of the following numbers on the bottom: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7- including lids.

A new partnership is underway with Community Living Kawartha Lakes and TAG to recycle computer parts and other electronics.