

Incineration not the answer

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To the editor:

When I first heard about Energy From Waste, I thought, "Wow, what a good idea."

It made sense to me to use the garbage as a source of valuable energy. Unfortunately, after learning more about the incineration process, it became apparent to me that incineration was both hazardous and wasteful.

Burning garbage is a very inefficient way to produce energy. Three times the energy can be saved by recycling paper, five times by recycling plastics and six times by recycling textiles. Recycling saves energy because materials that are diverted can be reused. Burned materials are gone forever and must be replaced, which uses more energy than incineration creates.

Even the best state-of-the-art incinerator releases toxic chemicals and dangerous nano particles into the air. Ontario emissions standards are lax. Of the 200 chemicals that are released, the Ministry requires testing on only eight of these. Testing is required only once in the first six months, then annually for five years. If during the five years toxic levels are kept low, no further testing is required.

Toxic ash will remain at a quantity of 25 per cent or more of the initial feed. Where will this go? Waste incinerators destroy valuable resources and promote a "throw away" mind set. Incineration will steal wealth and health from future generations. Please say no to incineration.

Pat Gostlin

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