

Need analysis before dismissing EFW energy possibilities

Wed Feb 20, 2008

To the editor:

Re: On energy from waste, we don't speak Swedish, Jennifer Stone column, Feb. 15.

Jennifer Stone made it sound as if the "waste incinerator for energy project" didn't make sense at all.

I think it doesn't make sense if we sit on our hands and do nothing about the energy crisis or, worse, give no chances to new alternatives.

I agree we don't have the piping system nor even homes with heat exchangers for district heating, but wouldn't it be fantastic if we did? How exactly could we achieve this? Heating our homes using natural gas is the worst way of using a high-energy density (or high-quality energy) resource, meaning natural gas can burn at temperatures as high as 1,300 degrees C; we waste all that potential for maintaining our home's temperature at around 22 degrees C.

Electricity is also considered high-quality energy, so why waste high-quality energy for heating homes? It makes perfect sense to use low-quality energy from waste that can't otherwise be transformed into electricity for heating our homes.

Further she said ". . . never mind the dollars necessary to pay for such a pricey endeavour." Pricey as compared to what other alternatives -- sitting on our hands? Has there been an alternatives cost analysis?

I am an international student in mechanical engineering and energy options at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology. I just think a complete life-cycle analysis and a present worth alternatives cost analysis with projections of the cost of natural gas and electricity over the next 20 years should be completed before anyone begins to critique proposed solutions.

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