

Metroland Letter to the Editor

More facts about Halifax waste

Tue Jun 17, 2008

Dear Editor:

I am writing with regard to your editorial, "Halifax trip should be cancelled", which appeared in your June 13 edition. Once again, I take exception to some of the facts included and am left wondering about the source of information you are using for the incinerator issue.

Here is the problem. You said, "In Halifax, residents put their recyclables and garbage in the same bag." This is simply not true. Halifax residents are required to separate out recyclables and organic material just like we are. The recyclable and organic materials are then sent to different sites for further processing and treatment. The residual garbage ends up at the stabilized landfill site where, to insure compliance, the bags are broken open, inspected and sorted to remove materials that weren't removed properly at the source. The residual garbage is mechanically and biologically treated to "stabilize" it prior to landfilling.

This process substantially reduces methane gas and leachate production and other parameters. This is what distinguishes a stabilized landfill from an old style or even an engineered landfill. It should also be noted that I believe that in Nova Scotia it is against the law to landfill organic material. The citizens of Halifax and Nova Scotia and the staff involved would be very upset with your analysis as they have developed a worldwide reputation for the handling of waste in their province.

On the other hand, I agree with much of what you said regarding the necessity of that many people making the trip, especially at this stage. Many of us who are opposed to the incinerator suggested many months ago they should look at stabilized landfill and aggressive diversion. It may be that Mr. Anderson and members of council who support incineration are getting a little nervous and are finally realizing they need a Plan B.

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