

The Orono Weekly Times

Wednesday, April 28, 2010

Enough is Enough

To the Editor,

Enough is enough. It's time for the "Silent Majority" to speak out in support of the Energy From Waste (EFW) facility that has been proposed for Durham Region. The cold, hard fact is that we generate in excess of 100,000 tonnes of garbage every year and somehow, we have to dispose of what cannot be reused or recycled.

A Toronto Star newspaper editorial, published on Tuesday, April 6, spoke in favour of Durham's EFW and noted the following:

1. Dr. Robert Kyle, Durham Region's Medical Officer of health has given the EFW facility the green light;
2. The facility meets Provincial environmental regulations;
3. Modern incinerators of this type, which turn waste into energy, are safely used across Europe and, closer to home, in Peel Region; and
4. A well run, modern incinerator meets all of our health, environmental and safety standards.

In a well researched series of articles published in the Toronto Star between April 3 and April 5, Catherine Porter pointed out that "even Greenpeace, once a fierce foe of incineration, has abandoned its campaign against it".

We have been sending our waste to landfills in Michigan, an act tantamount to dumping our household garbage on our neighbour's lawn. That will end soon because the Michigan site is closing and the provincial government has promised to stop sending Ontario's garbage over the border. That means we have to deal with the problem, deal with it now and do it right here, in our own back yard. Zero waste is a wonderful goal and one that all of us should aspire to. The harsh reality is that zero waste is impossible to achieve in the foreseeable future. That leaves us with two options, landfill or incineration, and according to Ontario's Environmental Commissioner, when it comes to environmental integrity, Durham has made the correct decision in choosing incineration over landfill.

I for one overwhelmingly support EFW and in this year's municipal election I will be voting for Mayor Jim Abernethy and those members of Council who were courageous enough to make some very difficult, but necessary, responsible and informed, decisions regarding the disposal of Durham's waste.

In closing let me say that "what is good enough for Greenpeace is good enough for me". To the detractors of EFW I have only this to say, "you have every right to voice your opinion and share your concerns but I have yet to hear you suggest a sensible, viable alternative to our waste problem."

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