

UKWIN

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## **Did McDonald's give Sheffield's incinerator indigestion?**

Sheffield incinerator operator Veolia has been forced to seek household waste from further afield after shortfalls in waste arising combined with increased reliance on trade waste resulted in what Veolia describe as "notable inefficiencies to the energy generating process". Veolia has applied for planning permission to import 75,000 tonnes of extra household waste a year from Barnsley, Doncaster and Chesterfield.

Veolia's admission calls into question any incinerator operators' ability to rely on topping up with commercial and industrial waste. As householders continue to reduce, reuse and recycle, an increasing number of incinerator operators appear to be chasing a diminishing quantity of household waste.

In [a letter to Sheffield City Council](#), dated 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008, Veolia's consultants RPS state that: "...it is evident that waste arisings have not grown as quickly as was assumed [in 2002]...Recycling rates have exceeded projections..."

The McDonald's connection was introduced when in 2007 the multi-national fast food retailer struck a deal with Veolia to incinerate waste from eleven McDonald's outlets in Sheffield, Rotherham and Barnsley. Could it have been the high-calorie polystyrene and fatty food waste that caused problems for the Sheffield incinerator? Has the composition of Sheffield's trade waste changed as a result of the deal? Apparently so!

Sheffield City Council Planners asked Veolia to explain why in 2002 Veolia argued that a projected 80,000 tonne per annum shortfall could be filled with commercial waste, when now "it is now being argued that this level of commercial waste is a problem". RPS replied: "The composition [of] commercial wastes today do not reflect the circumstances which prevailed in 2001".

Local campaigners South Yorkshire Against Incineration (SAI), along with Sheffield Green Party activists, are gearing up to oppose Veolia's application.