

Larry Hurley displays a model of a proposed compost facility to be located across from the new dump.



Composting facility planned by private company for Milton

from FLAGSTAFF on page 1 the next few months, with a view to completing the building next March. Equity Environmental Services has already purchased 48 acres of land on the west side of First Line, across that road from the rear of the landfill site. Mr. Hurley has also contracted for delivery of the equipment necessary to run his operation. He's anxious to make a start. Although composting is a hot topic in environmental circles in Ontario, "there are lot of people talking but nobody is doing anything."

Mr. Hurley admits "it would be a hell of a lot nicer" if his firm's plans convince Halton Region to use the private sector for its composting, instead of building its own site. But he's prepared to go it alone. It just means, in terms of soliciting customers to bring material to his plant, he'd have to cast his net a little wider — beyond Halton. "We could end up in competition. That's a choice they have to make." However, he feels Halton may be faced with a tough public selling job in that case. "If they play against us

they have to convince the taxpayers to spend (an expected) \$17 million" on a publicly-funded composting plant that would not only duplicate Mr. Hurley's firm's efforts, it would probably be across the street from it. At present a Halton-commissioned study is underway regarding the feasibility of a regionally-run composting centre that would be located at the Milton landfill site. Halton wants to centralize whatever waste disposal facilities it ends up building, such as recycling depots and household chemical drop-off sites, at the landfill.

There's also the chance regional government could be under-bid by Mr. Hurley's firm in a competitive marketplace. Halton charges \$150 a tonne to accept waste. Mr. Hurley said his company could charge less.

Regional government is somewhat under the gun as far as lessening waste disposal goes, as are all municipal governments across Ontario. The provincial government has ordered that waste quantities going to landfills be slashed by 50 per cent of 1991 levels before the year 2000.

Originally Halton had hoped to meet that ambitious target — about twice the current level of waste reduction — by building incinerators that would burn garbage for energy. But that technology has fallen out of favour with the province, while composting is being strongly supported by Queen's Park.

Mr. Hurley said Equity Environmental Services will build a complex capable of handling all the compost-oriented waste produced in Halton — an expected 40,000 tonnes per year of residential and business waste.

The operation will take place completely inside a building, as opposed to some open-air composting centres, and will involve no escaping odors, he stressed. Fans and filters will insure no scents leave the building, he added.

His company will be using technology purchased from International Processing Systems, an American firm which currently runs similar facilities in the United States. There is only one such complex in Canada so far, in Vancouver, he said.

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