

Landfill site incinerator sitting idle, council wants action

By Donna Duric
Writer

Six Nations Band council was upset to learn the disintegrator it bought for the landfill site has only been up and running six times since its arrival late last fall.

And now Six Nations Band Council wants a deadline in place to get a permanent Kearns Waste Disintegrator Unit up and running at the landfill.

The current machine, which

has been operating at the Six Nations landfill for about two months, is a temporary garbage-disintegrator prototype that Kearns International is testing on Six Nations.

"Something has to occur to get this thing going," said Councillor Bob Johnson at Monday's Committee of the Whole meeting.

Elected Chief Ava Hill said, "That's what we're trying to do. We're trying to get him to get his lead hands back here

so he can properly train people to keep it going on a continual basis. We've got to get it going."

Councillors said they were under the impression the prototype would run continuously and were surprised to learn from Councillor Wray Maracle that it has been fired up only six times since it arrived here.

"That's kind of disturbing - all this pounding their chest... 'once it gets going, it burns

through garbage like butter'... not when it's not consistent," said Maracle. "That's one thing that Kearns has not proven yet."

Inventor John Kearns, however, told The Turtle Island News that a number of Six Nations employees that have been trained to run the machine haven't been showing up to work.

That's why it's not running continuously, he said.

"We've had quite a considerable amount of absenteeism," said Kearns.

"The absenteeism forces us to shut down. The machine only operates on the availability of garbage. When the machine operators don't come in, the machine starves, and it shuts down. It has never shut down because of mechanical or combustion inferiority. There has been incomplete labour."

Kearns said he plans to build a permanent machine at the landfill and he confirmed Monday afternoon that he and council are going to begin negotiations to build a permanent machine.

He said he can't have only one person running the ma-



Garbage piling up at disintegrator (Photo by Chase Jarrett)

chine.

"That is against the law. We've come up with an arrangement with the council that we know who is not coming in at a minimum of six or eight hours (before the shift) so we can ensure that replacement people will be available."

He said his philosophy is to employ local labour.

"Ninety-per cent of the local employees are excellent participants," he said.

He said the machine isn't supposed to run 24/7. He said he told council it would be better if the machine ran six

days a week, with shutdowns on Sundays, to give employees time off from work.

Councillor Dave Hill said the permanent machine needs to get built and he urged council to set a deadline.

"We've got to start putting deadlines on this stuff to get it done one way or the other," said Hill. "We're not giving this guy deadlines to get it done, or else, get it out of here."

The agreement between council and Kearns stated that Kearns only had to prove the machine works, he said.

"All they had to do was see it in operation," said Kearns. "The former chief and councillors had seen it over several days and they were satisfied it did what the...machine was supposed to do."

Last year, band council gave Kearns \$400,000 to tweak the prototype before bringing it here. The agreement stated that the \$400,000 would also be considered a down payment on the \$4.8 million cost of constructing a permanent machine here.

The Kearns waste disintegrator unit has never been used or tested in a municipality.

Kearns has been working on the invention for 25 years. He said it would take six months to build a permanent machine.

The plan, eventually, is to eliminate all the garbage that's built up at the landfill over the years.