

**THE REGION:** Tunnel vision could sabotage York's waste management future, Vaughan councillor charges

# Trash plan 'narrow and limited'

BY LISA QUEEN  
STAFF WRITER

York Region is shutting its eyes to new technologies for handling garbage, a short-sighted plan that will cost taxpayers millions of dollars, Vaughan Councillor Michael DiBiase fears.

But a frustrated Markham Councillor Gord Landon, chairperson of the waste management task force, wonders why DiBiase is suddenly condemning a strategy hashed out over the past three years.

As part of its overall garbage strategy, the region is looking for companies to operate its "wet-dry" systems.

Residents will put their kitchen waste into one garbage bag and dry trash into another.

The kitchen waste will be composted into fertilizer. Recyclable materials will be extracted from the dry stream and the rest of the waste will be dumped in a landfill.

The region is asking companies from around the world to detail their

composting facilities to council. A formal bidding process is expected later this year.

But DiBiase is upset the region is only interested in well-established technologies. Its waste report rules out consideration of "any unproven or evolving technology or system."

**'We don't want to invest a gazillion dollars to be a guinea pig.'**

DiBiase argued that just a month ago, he invited a company to explain to the task force how it could recycle glass into sand. He insisted that company would be excluded from providing council with information about its operations.

"Why are we closing ourselves and not getting the information? We've focused ourselves very narrowly on a wet-dry system," he said yesterday.

"Our scope is very narrow and limited." But Richmond Hill Mayor Bill Bell said the region can't afford to be the test case for new technologies. "We don't want to invest a gazillion dollars to be a guinea pig."

Landon agreed. "We're not interested in unproven technology. We want to go and kick the tires and see if it works," he said.

Landon bristled at DiBiase's claim that a composting facility will cost taxpayers at least \$50 million, while

emerging technologies would cost far less. "Where does it say that? Where does it say that, Michael? Where does it say in there (the request for information) that you have to come up with \$50 million. It doesn't say it anywhere."

DiBiase is upset York is developing its own garbage strategy rather than working more closely with Toronto.

But while York and Toronto continue to discuss joint ventures, Landon insisted it would be a risky move to partner with the city exclusively.



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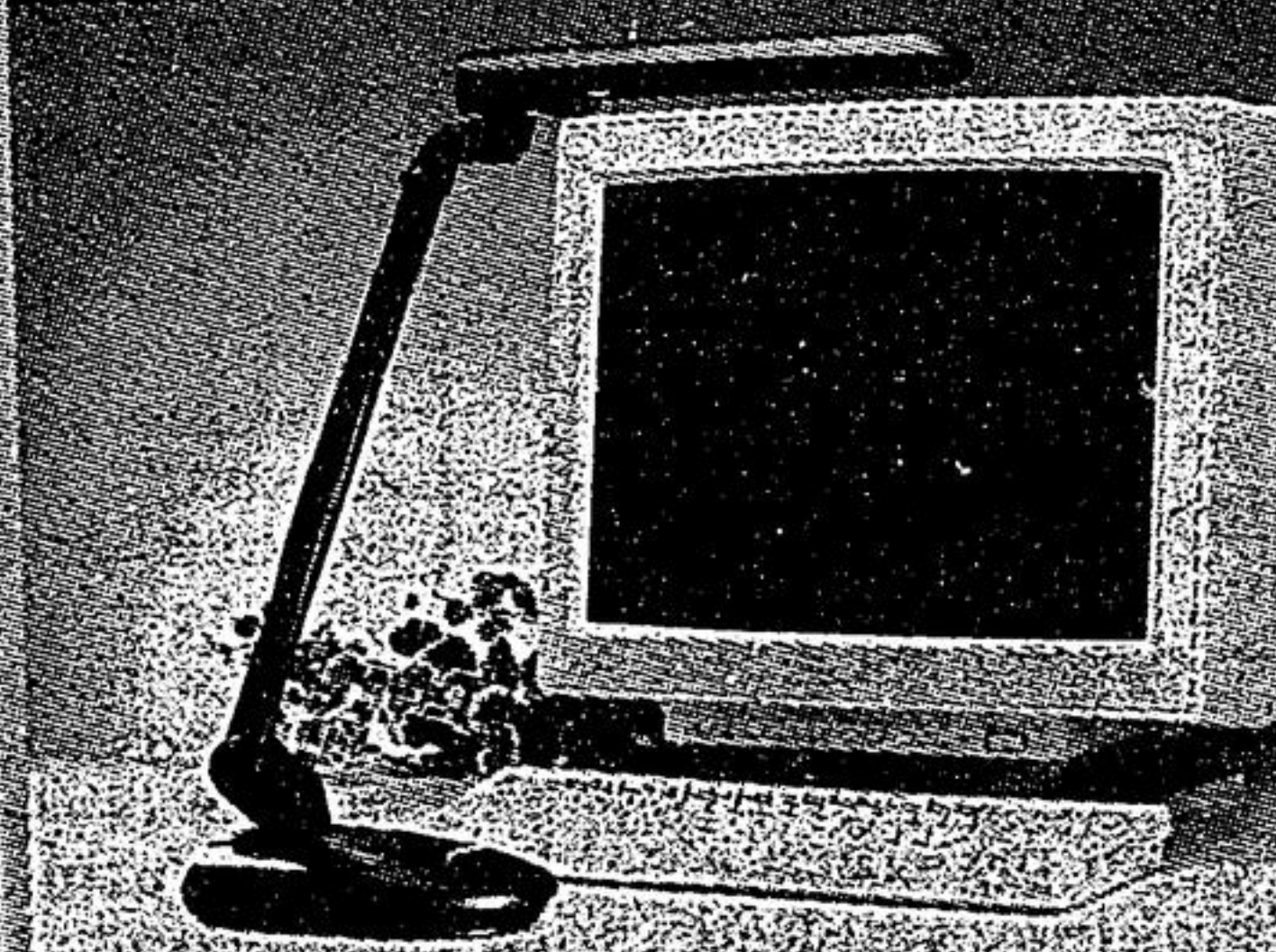
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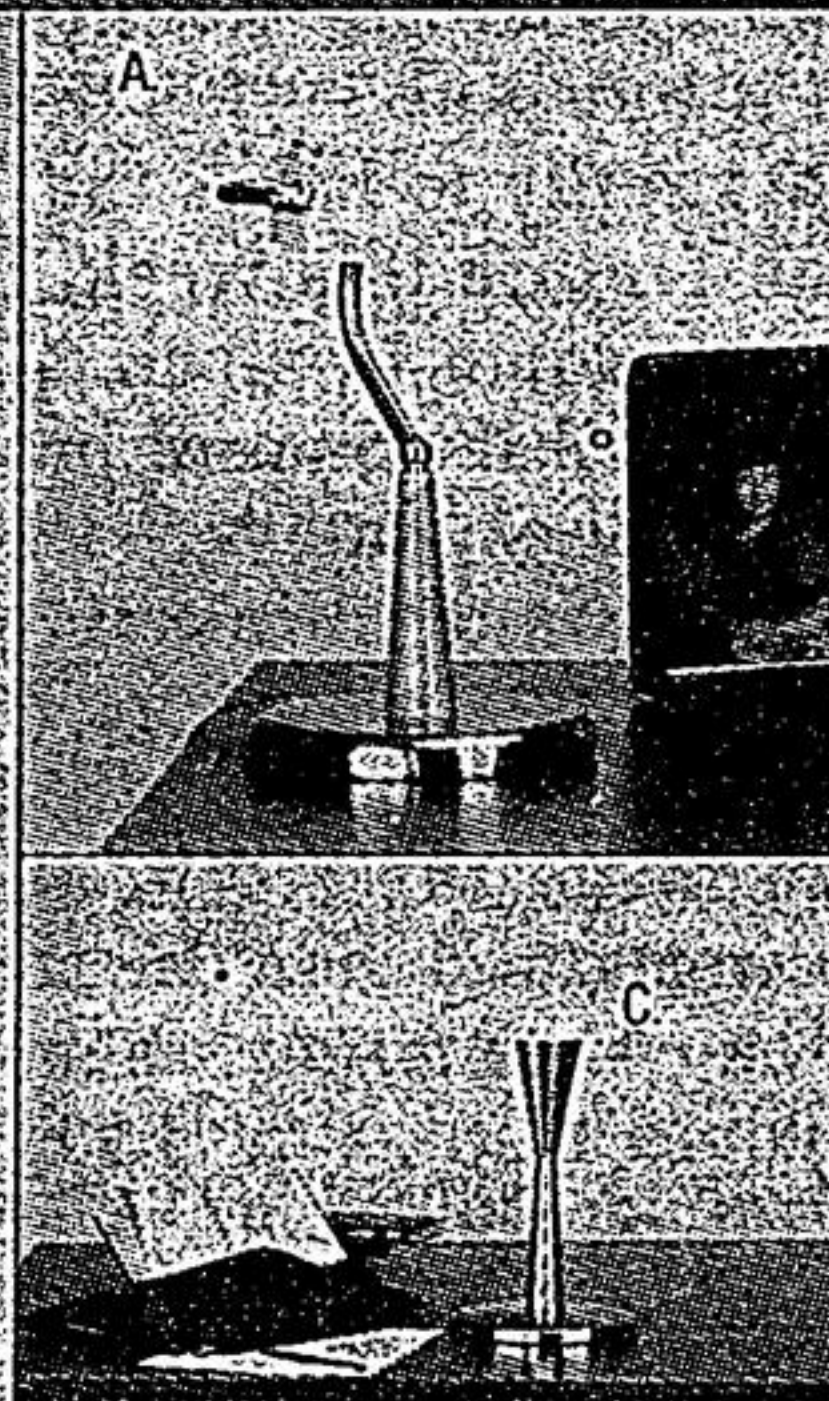
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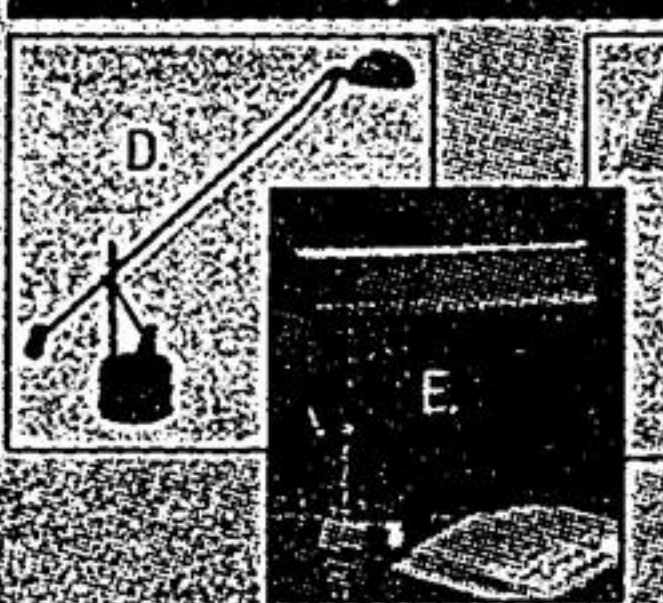
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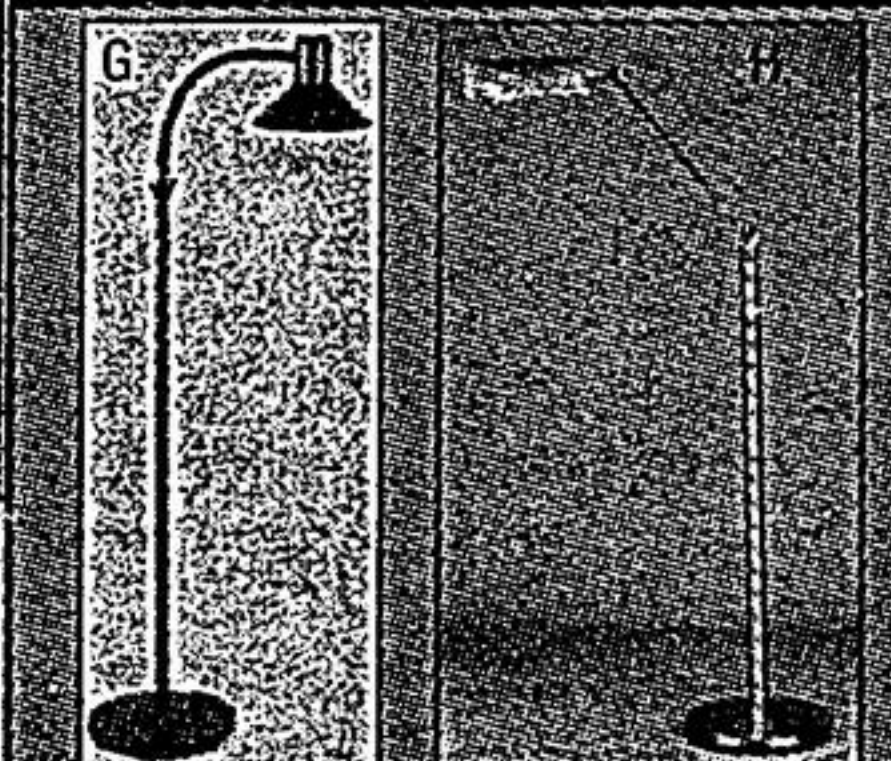
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