

One York site on incinerator short list

Regional councillors to vote on list of 5 sites today

BY SERENA WILLOUGHBY
Staff Writer

York Regional council is expected to approve a short list of sites for an incinerator to deal with your garbage today.

Five sites have been short listed, one in East Gwillimbury and four in Clarington, in Durham Region.

The region's waste management committee approved the list Tuesday and councillors in Durham region were to vote on the plan yesterday.

Once approved, the region's consultants will proceed with public consultations on the sites and a final site will be chosen by the end of the year.

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In April 2006, thermal treatment with energy recovery was recommended by the region's consultants as a way to deal with the trash left over after blue and green box diversion programs.

The proposed facility will burn the trash and use the heat to generate energy.

The site in York is at Concession 4 in East Gwillimbury, near the intersection of Hwy. 404 and Davis Drive, on 11 hectares owned by the region.

It is close to the contentious Halton Recycling facility, that, despite meeting Ministry of the Environment regulations, has been the bane of residents due to the odour it causes.

Jane Owens, who lives on East Hill Court near the proposed site, said choosing to put it on the short list of sites shows a lack of sensitivity to the problems caused by Halton.

"Given the current atmosphere in the south quadrant of Newmarket, I'm baffled this site would be chosen," she said.

Halton Recycling is implementing a remedial plan and biofilters to eliminate the stench, but despite its efforts, residents have formed a group called RASH: Residents Against Stinky Halton.

"We're the ones who are still here suffering," Ms. Owens said.

The incineration short list comes at the same time as the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy released a report on incineration in Ontario.

With Hamilton and Ottawa, as well as York and Durham considering incineration facilities, the time has come for the province to provide guidelines on these facilities, said Maureen Carter-Whitney research director for the institute.

"Our organization tries to step back

and look at the processes driving these initiatives.

"We're looking at the regulatory framework and looking at how things are done in Europe," Ms Carter-Whitney said.

Her report provides 10 recommendations, among them a study of the true costs of incineration and a scientific assessment of the risks and benefits of available incineration technologies.

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She also believes incineration technology should be reviewed on the basis of whether or not it is an appropriate means of waste disposal rather than as a means to provide energy, since she feels the technology is driving the current system.

She cautioned against waiting for a crisis before developing provincial guidelines and called on the province to provide leadership.

To read the region's report, go to www.durham.yorkwaste.ca

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