

Collingwood

Petition submitted to council over Ethanol Plant

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Peter Case says it's time for Collingwood Ethanol to shape up or ship out.

Case, chair of the Collingwood East Environmental Action Committee, presented Collingwood Council a petition with more than 425 names asking council to stand behind them and pressure the Ministry of Environment to do something about issues they have with the ethanol plant.

The group, led by chair Peter Case, made a presentation to council on Monday, voicing their concerns with the Ethanol company, which has been in operation for about a year.

More than 100 people showed up at the meeting to show their support for the cause and Collingwood Mayor Chris Carrier asked many of them to leave, as the town was in violation of the fire code - council chambers only seats 65.

Carrier said council would host another meeting in the future at a larger location.

Case said for the past year, residents of the surrounding area have had to deal with "oppressive, invasive, pungent and putrid," odours.

He also said there have been several hundred complaints about the plant and he says last summer residents had to close their windows and get off their decks because of the smell and the noise, which he said has been known to shake his walls.

"Arguments that dismiss these concerns because, as some would say, the area has always smelled - are irrelevant," Case said. "Odour-causing industries in the area were built in the 60s when environmental controls virtually did not exist and when there were only a few residential pockets in the east end. And, contrary to a common local perception, homeowners who purchased homes in new developments in 2003 and 2005, were not informed or even alerted to the likelihood of an ethanol plant in their backyards."

Mayor Carrier said he has held several meetings between representatives from Collingwood Ethanol, local residents and the Ministry of the Environment.

He said the most recent meetings were cordial and he felt they were helpful.

Carrier added the MOE would start source testing in June. He said the testing will take place during various points in the day and will be driven by complaints.

Case said the residents want the plant to stick to levels that are accommodating to the residents and the environment.



He said original estimates were that the plant would not emit more than 41 per cent of one odour unit.

"It's now time for Collingwood Ethanol to shape up or ship out," he said. It's time it took the residents seriously and did something to fix the problem."

Curtis Chandler, a director of Collingwood Ethanol, said the company has monthly meetings with the residents, Ministry of Environment officials and officials from the Town of Collingwood.

"We have spent a lot of time investigating the validity of the complaints," he said.

Chandler said the source testing is a requirement of the company's certificate of approval and he fully expects to be in compliance.

"We are prepared to resolve any issues that present themselves," he said.

Chandler trumpeted the company's environmental record saying it produces green feed and fertilizer and they have installed scrubbers to make the plant cleaner. He said the company also employs 52 people.

"It's a much better plant than it was," he said. "This plant is good for the Town of Collingwood."

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