

## Why is York not taking site off incinerator list?

Letters to the Editor  
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Re: Trash initiatives mean less burning needed, letter to the editor by York Regional chairperson Bill Fisch, July 12.

Mr. Fisch makes some excellent points in his letter. The York Region solid waste department has done a great job introducing waste diversion initiatives and in securing sufficient disposal capacity at favourable cost to satisfy York Region's garbage requirements for the next 25 years.

York Region has reduced its commitment to the proposed incineration facility to 20,000 tonnes, which is a good thing from a cost perspective as incineration is almost twice the cost of other safer and more Earth-friendly forms of waste disposal.

We could argue, based on York Region's own projected diversion rates, and based on Markham's success in diversion that should be propagated to the rest of the region, it is doubtful if, in fact, this 20,000 tonnes in additional capacity is required.

Even if we assume it will be required, which is doubtful, by committing to only a 12-per-cent ownership of the facility, York has turned all decision-making and negotiations over to Durham.

This, of course, also includes site selection.

On the topic of sites, I would like to point out this process initially had identified nine potential sites, one of which is in York Region.

This was then reduced to five short-listed sites; one in York Region and four in Durham.

In the past three months, two of the proposed Durham sites have disappeared from the list, leaving only two sites in Durham (one of which is owned by the region), as is the York Region site.

One can see where this is going.

Also, the proposed site in York Region is situated on land designated as greenbelt that proponents of incineration seem to ignore and is adjacent to the Black River watershed, which flows into Lake Simcoe and is also next to an ecologically sensitive area.

Why hasn't York Region removed this site from the list? It appears Durham has the ability to remove sites just by changing their designation.

Since one of the site criteria identified in the site selection was that the facility "not be near residential, farms or greenbelt, then why is it still a potential site?

This site does not adhere to any of the criteria, yet it is still on the list: this doesn't make any sense.

Durham is facing considerable opposition from its residents on this project, so if I'm Durham and I'm making the site selection, guess where it's going.

Since 90 per cent of the garbage going to this facility is from Durham and Durham is now also negotiating with Peterborough and possibly other municipalities for waste to send to this site, is York going to become Durham's dump?

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on behalf of Communities First East Gwillimbury