

## Letters to Editor

### **E F.W.: nothing truly disappears**

Dear Editor:

When it comes to producing clean energy, that adage, "if it sounds too good to be true..." usually holds true! At one time coal was considered to be the answer to all our energy needs. Acid rain and green house gasses came to be recognized as its shortfall. Nuclear energy was another panacea. No acid rain, but there's the little problem of billions of tons of radioactive tailings, millions of tons of radioactive waste from refinement, and thousands of pools of spent radioactive fuel rods. Then of course when the nuclear plants are decommissioned (mothballed), they have to sit there, idle, for the next 200 - 300 millennium!

Now along comes our energy Utopia, and thy name is - Energy From Waste (E.F.W.) This little beauty solves two problems simultaneously! We can produce energy and get rid of our garbage at the same time! What took us so long?

Our garbage - that, which we don't have the will or ability, to Reduce, Reuse, Recycle or Refuse, will now harmlessly disappear and produce clean energy at the same time! Yeah - and the Leafs will win the cup! The fact is, garbage is such a poor fuel, that the majority of the heat produced, actually comes from the natural gas that fires the incinerator. Proponents of E.F.W.s state that because it burns at 1000 degrees C. that it burns clean. Then how is it, that Nanticoke generating station fires it's pulverized coal at 1600 degrees C., and is the largest single polluter in the province?

I questioned myself, as to why those who advocate incineration believe that it's the answer to our garbage problem. The short answer seems to be that they've witnessed large buildings reduced to small piles of ash and rubble, and have seen cords and cords of firewood reduced to a few pails of ashes. Obviously, burning reduces volume, as well as, it will rid us of the noxious smells and unsightliness of our garbage. Out of sight, out of mind!

Sadly the volume isn't reduced, even though it appears as such! In 1785 Antoine Lavoisier discovered the Law Of Conservation; which states, "Matter can neither be created nor destroyed." In other words no matter what you do to a known mass of something, and no matter what state it's in, the weight never changes. A ton of water boiled, will become a ton of steam, and when cold enough, will become a ton of ice!

When you burn a ton of garbage, if you have a 100 pounds of ash left, the other 1900 pounds didn't disappear. If the scrubbers and filters could capture everything, we'd find our missing 1900 pounds here, but alas they can't, and most of it isn't there. The reality is the ,missing mass went up the stack to be spread far and wide, as microscopic toxic particulate, as well as carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide etc. Aren't these the same gasses responsible for global warming? Hello - is anybody home? If anything burned 100% totally clean, you wouldn't need a "smoke" stack, would you? By the way, now we're left with disposing of the toxic ash and detritus from the scrubbers and filters. I suppose it will have to be hauled to Sarnia's hazardous landfill, as it's the only one in the province. Isn't this the same trip down the 401 that those dirty diesel-emitting transports take to haul garbage to Michigan, that people are presently opposed to?

It's been recently reported that Durham Region, is fronting some of the money for the costs of all studies and legal advice incurred by the potential host of the proposed E.F.W. in Courtice. Apparently, Clarington is to later reimburse the Region, from any royalties Clarington might receive for hosting the facility. Does this mean that Clarington is actually looking to this incinerator as a revenue generator? Some might say that those who sell themselves as such, even when they know it will have a terrible impact on their personal health and well being, are members of the oldest profession! I can't help but wonder if the possibility exists that our politicians could be eyeing this as a cash cow. If so, why aren't other municipalities clamouring to host this E.F.W.? Maybe their politicians will be blessed with the foresight and good fortune of ours! They didn't have the wherewithal to scoop up Total Hockey, either!

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