

From: York Region Newspaper Group [www.yrng.com](http://www.yrng.com)

**April 11, 2007**

### **Residents cry foul over proposed incinerator site**

York Region staff and consultants were feeling the heat last night as residents voiced concerns over plans to build an incinerator to deal with York and Durham's trash. Issues ranging from a lack of communication to the danger incineration poses to water and air were raised.

A committee has selected five potential sites for a \$250-million energy from waste facility to burn garbage left over after green and blue bin diversion efforts.

One is in East Gwillimbury, near Hwy. 404 and Davis Drive. The others are in Clarington near Hwy. 401. Homeowners who have been dealing with the stench from the Halton Recycling plant on Davis Drive for the past few years said the proposed facility would further add to the smell.

Although the proposed facility is to deal with garbage, not organics as Halton does, the residents have endured a long battle with Halton, which is now working to clean up its site.

Jim Gibbons, who lives on Riverstone Court in Newmarket, said he is very concerned a site is being proposed so close to a residential development.

"We're downwind of this place. That's totally unacceptable to us," he said, adding westerly wind would blow particles from the plant's smoke stacks on to his property.

He first heard about the facility April 3 when a notice arrived at his home. He e-mailed the region the following day, he said, but never received a response.

Until the sites were short-listed, communication with residents had been mainly through newspapers and the region's website, consultant Jim McKay said.

Roland Peacock, a Georgina resident, said he is concerned the site is close to the Black River, making it possible for pollution to leak into the river and flow into Lake Simcoe.

"I think everyone in York Region should be concerned with the way wetlands are disappearing and, really, our rivers are being trashed. It's our kids' future, not ours," he said.

His comments were greeted with cheers from the audience of about 100 who attended the meeting at the Roman Palace Banquet hall on Ringwell Drive, not far from the site.

The plant would be designed with zero wastewater discharge, not like a landfill that leaks into rivers or groundwater, explained David Merriman another of the region's consultants.

Laura Bowman, a member of the York Simcoe Naturalists, expressed concern about mercury and dioxins, both carcinogens.

"Air deposition will deposit mercury in the Black River, it will deposit mercury in the area around the facility," she said.

She balked at Mr. Merriman's claim that since there would be no wastewater deposits coming from the proposed facility, there is no threat to groundwater because air emissions can contaminate water.

More public meetings are planned.