

Trash trip worth the price

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If you want to know whether something works, whether it is safe, whether it can be useful to you, you simply have to check it out first-hand.

When it comes to as important an issue as incineration or energy from waste, there is no substitute for seeing how it works and the effects it has had on people over the past few decades.

That's why the recent trip to Europe undertaken by Mayor Jim Abernethy and regional councillors Charlie Trim and Mary Novak was so essential for the taxpayers of Clarington.

After all, should an incinerator for non-divertable waste be constructed in Clarington, it's critical that our regional representatives compile as much information as possible before any final decisions are made.

While it's true that we live in a world where a click of the mouse can reveal much to ponder and phones and fax machines -- not to mention Blackberries -- can provide plenty of information, you simply need to see, feel, smell, hear and touch to really know.

Mayor Abernethy and Councillor Novak were not even part of the regional government process that led to the decision by York and Durham regions to look at an energy from waste alternative. So, as newly elected reps, it is essential they be brought up to speed as soon as possible so they can make informed, sensible decisions. And Councillor Trim, recently elected to serve as chairman of the Region's works committee, needs obviously to be firmly in the loop.

There are clearly very strong feelings about incineration among those Clarington residents who have come out to information sessions on the subject. Worries about air pollution and about the efficacy of using incineration instead of pushing for 100 per cent diversion have been raised.

To that end, on what is clearly the No. 1 decision in Clarington -- where four of the five potential incineration sites have been identified -- over this municipal term, the mayor and councillors appear to be doing everything they can to get as much information as possible.

While no decisions have been made and should not be made until a full environmental assessment is completed, taxpayers should feel confident their elected officials are doing their jobs to provided intelligent input into whatever final decision will be made. We should expect no less.

-- *Clarington This Week*