

Councillor questions works newsletter

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By Erin Hatfield

DURHAM – Propaganda is what one councillor is calling the Region of Durham's works department newsletter.

"Why does the Region continue to spread false information?" Oshawa Councillor Brian Nicholson asked during the Nov. 21 meeting of Regional Council.

He was questioning the information contained in the fall/winter edition of 'Durham Works'.

The newsletter is mailed to residents as a means of keeping them up to date on works projects and initiatives and went out last week. Included were articles on energy-from-waste, the preferred energy-from-waste site in Clarington, plastic recycling and high-efficiency toilets.

"I want to know how much this cost, how many are delivered and what the cost of delivery is," Coun. Nicholson said. "So the taxpayers can know how much is being spent on Regional propaganda."

He said he thinks the information contained in the energy-from-waste article is biased and not a fair representation of both sides of the debate over the technology. The Region is in the process of completing an Environmental Assessment of energy-producing incineration as a means of dealing with Durham's waste. A steady flow of residents continue to make delegations to council and committees questioning the environmental impact of this method.

"I think we are putting out propaganda, not information," Coun. Nicholson said. "When taxpayers are paying for this don't you think you have an obligation to show them both sides so they can make the decision for themselves whether or not it is safe?"

Commissioner of Works Cliff Curtis said this was the first criticism he had received about the newsletter and he feels it is a useful tool for the Region.

"We provide as much factual information as we can on the subject," he said.

"With this newsletter we reach people who are not inclined to come out to the more formal information sessions."