

## **Incinerator could be safe, but choose the right site: consultant**

### **Take forward two sites, says air quality specialist**

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By Jennifer Stone

CLARINGTON -- A safe incinerator could most likely be built at any of the sites on Durham and York's short list, but the Regions should carry two sites forward in the process to ensure the best possible location is chosen, says a consultant hired by Clarington.

Asked in an interview if an incinerator would be safe, Dr. Tony van der Vooren, of AMEC Americas Ltd., said, "I would never give an unqualified absolute for anything."

However, "if they (incinerators) are well-designed and well-operated, I would consider them to be safe."

The peer review was aimed at looking at work done by the Regions' consultants to date on the project, including reports leading to a preferred site.

Clarington's regional councillors grilled the peer reviewers on hand at Monday's General Purpose and Administration Committee extensively on both their credentials and their findings. All four of the reviewers reached the same conclusion: carry forward two geographically diverse sites until technology is chosen, so the two can be considered together.

Dr. van der Vooren said determining background air quality, and the eventually determined technology's potential addition to that, would be important.

"One of the challenges we have right now is that a number of the air quality indicators ... are based on very generic data. We don't have the background data at all of the sites," he said. "Therefore, we have a very difficult time in terms of looking through the process (to determine) if those things changed, would the final preferred site be the (current) preferred site."

It could well be that the Clarington site, identified by the Regions' consultants as being the preferred location, would be the best site, said Dr. van der Vooren. But, by carrying two sites through, the Regions could reach the best decision.

Even without all the background information available, it is clear Clarington and East Gwillimbury have "two fairly distinct air sheds," given relative proximity to major highways and other industry, and other considerations, said Dr. van der Vooren.

"Key sources in the area that will impact the site specific local air quality in the Clarington sites include St. Marys Cement, (the) Oshawa urban area, General Motors and major transportation corridors (eg. 401 and 35/115)," said Dr. van der Vooren's report. "These are existing sources that will impact the sites and through these have been qualitatively assessed (i.e. the presence of these sources reduces the desirability of the Clarington sites) it has not yet been determined if the absolute level of impact at the sites are acceptable."

On the other hand, the East Gwillimbury site doesn't have nearly as much nearby, which could potentially tip the scales, he said.

"All we're really suggesting is, just do a little bit more," Dr. van der Vooren said.

But, Durham Works Director Cliff Curtis said carrying two sites forward into technology selection would be too costly.

Not necessarily, said Dr. van der Vooren.

"Yes, there would be an increased cost, but not horrifically costly," he said.

While some councillors questioned whether the peer reviewers had over-stepped their bounds by making a recommendation, Dr. van der Vooren said it was not unusual to have such an outcome.

"I'm always very clear that when I'm talking on a peer review, that I'm not in opposition to the project," he said. Instead, it's the reviewers job to "strengthen the process."

In this case, all they were saying, said Dr. van der Vooren, is that the Regions should "do some more detailed work on the two sites as you move forward."