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## 'Easy to say no' to incineration: Regional Chairman

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### But tough decision must be made

By Jennifer Stone

COURTICE -- Saying no to incineration is taking the easy way out, says Regional Chairman Roger Anderson.

"It's pretty easy on people to go around saying no to something," he said, as he addressed the Clarington Board of Trade Thursday.

But by exploring the incineration option, Mr. Anderson said he feels "Durham Region has taken the risk of being a leader in waste management in the province of Ontario."

Years ago, the Region took the position that opening a new landfill was not a solution, nor was exporting waste to other municipalities or countries.

"If it's good enough for us to send our garbage to the U.S. or if it's good enough for us to send it to Peterborough, then it's good enough for the City of Toronto to send their garbage here," he warned. "Durham should be responsible for Durham's garbage and we should tell our neighbours to keep their garbage the hell out."

The City of Toronto has purchased a landfill site near London, which the City says has capacity for at least 15 years worth of Toronto trash.

It's too late for Durham to go the landfill route, even if it wanted to, given that a deal between Ontario and Michigan -- where much of Durham's garbage currently goes -- states that no more trash will be sent there after 2010, he said.

"If you're going to say no to incineration, don't tell me to go open a landfill," Mr. Anderson said. "It's going to take five, 10, 15 years to get through the environmental assessment process."

Clarington residents will, within one year, see changes to the waste collection schedule with garbage being picked up every two weeks -- instead of weekly -- and recycling flipping from an alternating week schedule to weekly collection. That, combined with a requirement for clear garbage bags to be used, ought to increase Clarington's diversion numbers, the chairman said.

"If the garbage bag has compost or recyclable material (the collector) will leave it for you so you can sort through it. You can keep that now-wet garbage and keep it for two weeks," he said.

People are already complaining about the fact some materials with the recycling symbol aren't being collected as part of blue box collection. That's not the Region's fault, Mr. Anderson said.

"Just because it's got that recyclable thing on it, don't believe it," he said. Not everything with the symbol is currently recyclable, "and I can't store it all."

"I can collect everything you want. Throw it all in the blue box but then, I'm going to put it in a garbage truck and burn it or bury it."

Taking questions from the floor, Mr. Anderson didn't answer a direct query from a Clarington local councillor as to whether the Region would allow its staff or consultants to participate in an open debate on the pros and cons of incineration. Instead, he reiterated that landfill is not a possibility, nor is the Zero Waste alternative that has been touted by some opposed to incineration.

Asked by another member of the audience what Clarington stood to gain financially from being host to an incinerator for the Region, Mr. Anderson said negotiations are currently underway.

"I understand it's going to be somewhat significant," he said.