

Incinerator business case challenged

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DURHAM -- Durham Regional councillors are considering the business case for incineration at a joint finance and administration-works committee meeting this morning.

The meeting started with a series of delegations from those opposed to council approving the business case, which was released on Friday. Issues raised include health concerns and questions about whether the business case was too optimistic for incineration and too pessimistic for the alternative of landfill somewhere in Ontario.

"Please, please, do not accept this report," said Barry Bracken, who criticized the numbers in the report.

Following the public comments, Durham staff and Deloitte financial analyst Remo Bucci presented the case to the 20 councillors in attendance.

Mr. Bucci said Durham would be a leader in the GTA if it chose the energy-from-waste option.

"It's truly a local, long term solution," he said.

Finance commissioner Jim Clapp said the Region took a conservative approach to preparing the business case and that the gas tax would be a good way to finance the facility.

"(We) have this golden opportunity to control our own destiny relative to the disposal of our garbage," he said.

Emissions criteria revised

At their meeting this week, the Durham-York Joint Waste Management Group rescinded previously approved emissions criteria and approved a stricter set.

The revised emissions criteria includes stricter parameters for hydrogen chloride, which has been lowered from 20 milligrams per cubic metre to nine milligrams per cubic metre, putting it in line with European Union (EU) standards, and the operational limit for lead was lowered from 70 micrograms per cubic metre to 50. The lead limit now matches the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment guidelines. The latter standard was recommended by Clarington's peer reviewer.

As well, the project team recommended the use of a cartridge system for the continuous sampling of dioxins and furans, which are toxic as opposed to the previously recommended semi-annual stack tests. Although stack tests are acceptable under EU regulations, the more expensive continuous sampling method produces more accurate results.