

## Letter to the Editor

### Deny REM application

*The following is an open letter to Port Hope Mayor Linda Thompson and members of Port Hope Council.*

I am writing this to be on record as opposing the proposal by Renewable Energy Management Inc. (REM) for an gasification incinerator plant to be built in the municipality.

I attended the November information event at the Capitol Theatre and spoke with REM-Entech representatives, including Douglas Starr, executive vice-president, to whom I spoke at length. I have since done considerable research into the issue. At first glance the company's sales pitch to the municipality may seem like the plant would be an acceptable industry, however if you investigate further, many troubling problems are revealed.

REM's incinerator would fundamentally change the

nature of Port Hope. REM is proposing to burn up to 540,000 tonnes of garbage per year, yet all of Northumberland County only produces 34,000 tonnes of municipal waste per year (including Port Hope's portion of 5,200 tonnes). This can only mean that much of Southern Ontario's garbage will come to Port Hope — including, inevitably, waste from the Greater Toronto Area — bringing with it health risks, truck traffic, decreased property values and a new stigma.

The proposed gasification process produces emissions such as lead, mercury, dioxins and other toxins that can all have serious health consequences. There is also the potential for production of minute, toxic particulate matter, called nanoparticles, that can enter the bloodstream when inhaled.

The Pickering, Ontario-based company, Renewable Energy Management Inc.

(REM) is licensing incineration technology from Entech (a privately owned Australian company). REM's incineration technology is untested in Canada and the United States, and REM has no track record of building and operating incinerators. Port Hope would be their first incinerator project.

Port Hope is just now finally embarking on a major cleanup, and trying to rebrand and repair its image. Do we want to engage in another long term problem that would produce negative publicity for the municipality? We would go from one garbage dump image to another! Maybe that was part of the REM's strategy: perhaps they thought that since Port Hope had long suffered from the stigma of nuclear waste, that its citizens would be less likely to object to what REM would try to pitch as cleaner waste. Well, they are wrong, and the citizens will not tolerate Port

Hope becoming an incinerator for southern Ontario!

Please note that Toronto's annual waste requiring disposal is 793,000 tonnes and "is comprised of municipal waste Toronto collects from residents, commercial establishments, schools and its Agencies, Boards, Commissions and Divisions as well as paid waste from private waste haulers and other municipalities." Source: <http://www.toronto.ca/garbage/facts.htm>

Clarington, Durham and York have an agreement to manage their own waste with an incinerator plant under construction in Clarington. Their agreement specifically excludes Toronto garbage. (The current mayor of Clarington won election on an anti-incinerator campaign.) How convenient for Toronto to find an incinerator just an hour along the 401 with capacity to dispose of 64% (507,000 tonnes) of Toronto's garbage

in Port Hope - and how profitable for REM!

Do not be misled by the REM pitch that its plant will be just for local garbage, as was told to us at the information event at the Capitol. If that were the case, their licensing application and facility plans would not be for a capacity 540,000 tonnes, when Northumberland County only produces 34,000 tonnes. Please, let's not have our council or town staff be hoodwinked by a slick and misleading sales presentation.

I urge you to consider the many negative consequences to the municipality if the gasification incinerator is built.

Do you want your legacy as a council member to be the approval of a massive incinerator that damaged the health and reputation of the community for generations to come?

I respectfully request that you deny their application and the Official Plan amendment.

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