

Caledon Citizen

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Office Administrator: Cheryl Phillips
Email: admin@caledoncitizen.com

Telephones: 905-857-6626 or 905-857-5846
Fax: 905-857-6363

Website: www.caledoncitizen.com

Main Office: 25 Queen Street, North, Bolton L7E 1C1

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Publisher: Bruce R. Haire
Advertising Manager: John H. Archibald
Editor: **Mark Pavilons** Email: editor@caledoncitizen.com
Staff Reporter: **Alan Liczyk** Email: alan@caledoncitizen.com

Incineration: no longer merely a dirty word?

At last, it would seem there's one subject on which the two main combatants in next October's Ontario election seem to be in agreement.

Both Premier Dalton McGuinty and Opposition Leader John Tory both favour state-of-the-art incineration as an option for dealing with solid wastes.

McGuinty says he hopes the day will come when the world will look to Ontario for guidance on incinerating garbage. He says his government is now allowing municipalities to fast-track pilot projects in hopes of pushing the technology forward and one day cashing in on its success.

The premier noted burning solid wastes to create energy could be a solution to overloaded landfill sites and Ontario wants to be ahead of the pack in developing incineration technology. Highlighting a test in Ottawa that involves gasification, he said that could be the future.

The Plasco Energy Group project he was referring to uses high heat to turn garbage into a gas that is then turned into power. It's under construction and expected to be operating this summer. It's the only waste-to-energy pilot project currently under construction in Ontario.

The premier said the government will let such small pilot projects bypass some time-consuming environmental assessments to provide an opportunity for the province to become a leader in incineration, rather than getting left behind.

Not surprisingly, some environmentalists say the premier should instead focus on recycling, noting that incineration could create even more emissions than coal if it's not done properly.

As matters stand, the only remaining political opposition to incineration seems to be coming from the New Democrats provincially (who banned it during their term in office) and Mayor David Miller and his allies in Toronto, who seem to feel its use would be a step backward.

Tory, who campaigned for garbage incineration in Toronto during his run for mayor in 2003, said it's about time Premier McGuinty embraced the technology.

Proponents can point to the success of a project in Peel that slipped through before the NDP ban was imposed. In operation since 1992, the modern incinerator in

Brampton has always been able to operate within Ontario's stringent air-quality standards.

And the premier's strong stand should provide needed encouragement for Dufferin County and Southgate Township councils, both currently examining gasification as an option for dealing with this area's solid wastes in a manner that we see as environmentally preferable to using landfills, and can have an added benefit in the form of energy production.

A recent report on garbage incineration by the Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy warned against making it the sole key to a waste strategy, but doesn't discount the technology.

There's surely no reason why incineration and recycling should be mutually exclusive, or even why permitting incineration should involve any retreat from recycling.

One tactic municipalities can surely employ is the imposition of higher deterrent fees for those who treat their wastes as garbage rather than recyclable materials.

For example, once any municipality offers its residents both blue-box recycling and green-box composting, there should be no need to continue "free" garbage pickups. We think Orangeville council is on the right track in opting to start charging households a \$1-a-bag fee for garbage beyond one bag per week and contemplating a further step that would see a charge of up to \$2 a bag for any wastes not put out for recycling or composting.

Ontario is clearly in a waste-disposal crisis, with municipalities and businesses currently sending nearly four million tonnes of garbage each year to Michigan. Under an agreement, that option is to end in 2010, leaving our municipalities precious little time to come up with alternatives.

All told, the province's residents, businesses and the construction industry produced 13.3 million tonnes of waste in 2005, and only 3.3 million tonnes of it - 25 per cent - were diverted.

In the circumstances, short-circuiting the normal environmental assessment processes for pilot gasification schemes makes eminently good sense in an era when even green energy projects are encountering long delays from opponents who persistently deny their *Not In My Back Yard* status.

WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT THE NEW CONSERVATIVE CAMPAIGN HQ?



THE VIEW.

Our Readers Write

Hospice says thanks for support

On behalf of Hospice Caledon I would like to thank everyone who participated in our fund-raiser, *Afternoon of Indulgence*, held Feb. 24. The community support was phenomenal. It takes a very special person to find time in today's busy world to help others in the community.

Many thanks to our generous sponsors James Dick Construction Limited, Compassionate Care Health Services Inc., Juergen Partridge Designs, Bolton Electric, Arcadia Academy of Music, Oxford Learning Centre, Bolton Family Foot Care, Let's Decorate.

Thanks to the following group of people for either their participation or donation to this event: Rose Daley- Energies, Jan Borron-Richter- Advance Family Chiropractic and Massage Therapy, Tonie Sampogna, Nu-Life Massage, Cathy Mackenzie, Head to Toe Spa, Artistry, Nancy Hall, Trim-U, Core Solutions, Albion Hills Chiropractic, Lighthouse Healing Centre, Lisa Maciag, Valerie McGrady, Jackie Clark, Carmen Verdugo, Cecelia Bax, Susan Graham, Stephen Hudecki, Mary Hatch, Sandra's hair Salon, Tracey Iacovelli, Tip To Toe Wellness, Revive Fitness, Joy of Yoga, Hana By Design, Herbalife, The Naked Vine, Undercover Wear, Sisters Creating a stir, Optimum Health laser Centre, Creative Memories, Rainbow Creations Jewelry Designs, & Accessories, Curves For Women, For Everyday Wellness, Hockley Valley Resort & Spa, Dansar Creations, Seven Arrows Learning Centre Inc, Shelley Witzke- Pampered Chef, Ingrid Folkers-Tupperware, Marketing Warehouse, Staples Business Depot, Alexandre's, Region Of Peel Agricultural Society, Shoeless Joe's, Broadway Farms Market, Davis Feed & Farm Supply, Skylark Framing, Top of the Hill Bed & Breakfast, Fines Ford, Water Depot, Mystic Echos, Glen Echo Nurseries,

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Many thanks to Christine's Flowers for providing the beautiful flower arrangements. Molly Jakeman & the Catholic Women's League for supplying a delicious lunch. Thank you to the *Caledon Citizen* and Caledon Enterprise for enabling us to promote our event. Once again thank you to all of the wonderful volunteers who helped us on the day!

All proceeds from this event will help Hospice Caledon continue to deliver programs and services within the Caledon community to families who are facing a life threatening illness or are grieving a loss.

Diane Morrison
Hospice Caledon

Nice farewell to John

I wanted to drop this note to express my thanks to Richard Whitehead, and your paper, for the fine tribute to John Davidson. Well said.

Ernie Norris
Durango, Colorado

Caledon Citizen



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