

What's Next?

Consultations are underway on the Draft WTE plan. The 90-day consultation period ends on **July 14, 2010**.

The Metro Vancouver Directors who sit on the region's waste management committee will meet in the second half of July to debate amendments to the plan. Their recommendations go to a vote of the full Metro board, likely at the end of July. If passed by the Metro Vancouver board, the document goes to environment minister Barry Penner and one of three things could happen. He may:

- Approve the plan as presented by Metro without changes,
- Make changes himself and then approve the amended plan,
- Flag deficiencies in the plan and send it back for Metro to amend and resubmit.

There is still time to amend the Plan, and many things you can do!

What You Can Do!

Submit your comments to Metro Vancouver by July 14, 2010.

Address comments to the attention of Lois E. Jackson, Chair, Metro Vancouver, or Greg Moore, Chair of Metro Vancouver Waste Management c/o

Email: icentre@metrovancover.org

Fax: 604. 432. 6297

Mail: Metro Vancouver, Public Involvement Division
4330 Kingsway, Burnaby B.C.
V5H 4G8

Contact the BC Minister of Environment:

Hon. Barry Penner (Victoria)

Email: barry.penner.mla@leg.bc.ca

Phone: 250 387-1187

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Mailing Address:

Parliament Buildings
500 block Belleville Street
Victoria, BC, V8V 1X4

Chilliwack contact info:

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Toll Free: 1 866 553-5537

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101 - 7388 Vedder Road
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Contact your MLA:

To find your local MLA visit: <http://www.leg.bc.ca/mla/3-1-1.htm>

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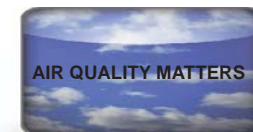
Air Quality Matters and is of significant importance to those who live in the Fraser Valley.

The lower Fraser Valley is a confined airshed, particularly susceptible to the build-up of contaminants that have serious negative impact on human health and the environment.

Metro Vancouver is proposing a Waste-to Energy (WTE) strategy, as part of their Draft Solid Waste Management Plan (SWMP) to annually incinerate an additional 500,000 of the 1.2 million tonnes of garbage that will not be recycled, composted or otherwise diverted from households, businesses and industry.

Adopting this strategy could have far-reaching impacts on our sensitive airshed. While scientists and experts can't agree on the exact nature of those impacts, we believe that until the science is conclusive and the WTE incineration technology and emission standards are proven to be effective, efforts should focus on reducing, reusing and recycling, more aggressive diversion targets, industry-led takeback programs and ongoing strategies targeting zero waste.

We invite you to participate in this discussion – read on to find out how!



What is Waste-to-Energy incineration of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW)?

In short, it is burning garbage to generate energy.

Metro Vancouver's proposed Draft SWMP for the region, would allow the construction of a new WTE incinerator taking up to 500,000 tonnes of garbage per year – remaining garbage would go to the existing Burnaby Incinerator, or the Vancouver Landfill in Delta.

Other options include sending garbage to an out-of-region WTE incinerator, such as the one proposed at Gold River on Vancouver Island, or sending garbage to a remote site like the Cache Creek Landfill.

What does it have to do with Air Quality in the Valley?

Coastal wind patterns and the nature of our geography create a sensitive airshed in the Fraser Valley, particularly susceptible to the build-up of air-borne contaminants.

WTE incineration produces fine particulates, including nanoparticulates which can pass through the most sensitive scrubbing equipment, and are the prime cause of pollution and haze. The same particles can penetrate deep into the lungs and have been linked to both respiratory and cardiac diseases.

WTE Incineration also creates harmful chemicals such as dioxins, that are not only toxic but also persistent and bio-accumulative. This has an impact on human health, the natural environment and on the livestock and produce that originate in the valley.

What are the impacts of Waste-to-Energy incineration of MSW on the environment?

The biggest environmental impact of Waste-to-Energy is on air quality, and building new or expanded WTE facilities will introduce additional air-borne pollutants into our sensitive Fraser Valley airshed.

Common, everyday items often contain toxic elements such as lead, cadmium and mercury. If these items are not recycled or diverted from the waste stream, they may eventually end up in incinerators, and can result in fine particulates (including nanoparticles) being released into the atmosphere.

Nanoparticles from incinerators contain neurotoxic metals, stabilized free radicals and compounds such as PCBs as well as dioxins and furans that are synthesized in the burning process.

What are the health impacts of Waste-to-Energy incineration of MSW?

Both short and long-term exposure to elevated concentrations of fine particulates have been shown to be hazardous to health, and linked to both respiratory and cardiac disease.

Many studies have shown a correlation between toxins released from WTE incineration, and their impact on human health, including elevated levels of PCBs and dioxins in the blood stream and mercury levels in hair, as well as increased rates of death by all cancers combined.



Is Waste-to-Energy incineration of MSW cost-effective?

Analysts of the process don't agree on the cost-effectiveness of the Waste-to-Energy proposal.

The financial model for the plan, based on an AECOM/Sheltair report, was recently reviewed by KMPG LLP Chartered Accountants. The KPMG Cost-Comparison study raises numerous questions about the financial implications and viability of the plan. KPMG's review also indicates that there is not enough information to prove that the capital, operating and maintenance cost estimates are accurate, and that detailed cost comparisons of options have not been completed.

The Metro Vancouver financial model highlights that 500,000 tonnes of waste is needed annually for the incinerator to meet its operating targets. Meeting these targets may prove to be a disincentive to waste reduction and recycling programs.

For sources please visit www.airqualitymatters.ca