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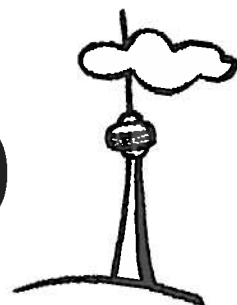
TEA'S FRIEND AND HERO DAVID SUZUKI DROPS IN TO SEE THE NEW DUNCAN STREET OFFICE.

FRDM LEFT TO RIGHT — JOHN WELLNER, COLLEEN CIRILLO, LOIS CORBETT, ELAINE WHITTAKER, DAVID SUZUKI,
RICH WHATE, GORD PERKS, SHELLEY PETRIE AND JANET MAY.

**A BETTER WAY TO RECYCLE IN TORONTO • 1999 SMOG REPORT
WHAT'S IN TORONTO'S WATER • INCINERATOR DEFEATED
PREVENTING CANCER CAMPAIGN • NEW YOUTH CAUCUS WEBSITE**

tea leaves

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TORONTO ENVIRONMENTAL ALLIANCE • WINTER/SPRING 2000



City Studies Plan To Divert 75% of Garbage from Disposal

by Gord Perks

Combining their expertise, TEA and the Toronto Civic Employees Union (CUPE Local 416) teamed up to design a new system to handle the big city's growing garbage pile that will finally achieve diversion targets Toronto has pursued for the past decade.

As this special report details, a Wet/Dry recycling and composting program will:

- triple the amount of recycling and composting
- simplify sorting in the home
- better enable residents in apartment buildings to recycle
- save Toronto \$28 million every year
- create 800 new jobs
- avoid the need for the city to buy a giant dump or mass burn incinerator to handle garbage

The CUPE/TEA plan was released to the public in November to tremendous press interest. After a period of intensive lobbying we took our plan to the important Works Committee of Toronto City Council. This committee directed staff to consider our plan along-side proposed private sector disposal options. We have already received a clear signal from City staff to keep pushing. They will have their review completed by March.

TEA and CUPE plan to use the time well. CUPE has launched a campaign of newspaper ads describing the program. We are working to get calls into City Councillors' offices. Your calls to your two City Councillors will make a difference as we campaign to bring Toronto up to a high waste diversion rate.

YOU CAN ORDER A COPY OF TEA AND CUPE'S GREEN FUTURE, GREEN JOBS BY PHONING TEA AT 596-0660.

TORONTO SMOG REPORT 1999

Scarborough residents breathed some of the dirtiest air in the province on September 3rd of last year.

The Air Quality Index (AQI) reading of 70 at the Scarborough test site set the record for the highest of Toronto's 1999 smog readings.

In all, Toronto residents breathed "moderate" and "poor" air for 63 days in 1999, putting this year's smog season in the record books as one of the dirtiest ever.

The main pollutant behind all these smoggy hours is ground-level ozone (O₃), formed when nitrogen oxides emitted by cars, trucks and industry combine with volatile organic compounds in a photochemical reaction on hot, sunny days.

Last March, the federal government released a Science Assessment Document on ozone, which found that the risk of dying increases as daily ozone levels rise above 15 parts per billion (ppb) for an hour or more. The Scarborough AQI reading of 70 translates into 109 ppb of ozone.

Health studies worldwide link ground-level ozone to inflammation of the lungs and other serious respiratory problems for asthma sufferers, young children, the elderly and those who exercise outside on moderate and poor air quality days.

Reports from Health Canada and the David Suzuki Foundation say smog causes 1,800 to 5,000 premature deaths in Ontario each year.

TEA has compiled 1999 smog data for the City and hopes to use it to influence the establishment of new regulations in Ontario and nation-wide. Lois Corbett, TEA's executive director, says new smog laws need to be introduced to push industry to dramatically reduce smog causing emissions and to protect people's health. "With readings like these, our governments must reduce cars, increase public transit, and shut down the Lakeview coal plant and other smog sources. We need air laws that protect the most vulnerable." ☘

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tea Meets Ontario's New Environment Minister

by Shelley Petrie

Premier Mike Harris' appointment of Tony Clement as Ontario's new Environment Minister has environmental groups cautiously optimistic that our environment and public health might, (and we emphasize might), be better protected during this term of the Tory government.

Upon taking office Clement immediately instituted an open door policy, meeting with environmental groups like TEA who have been sharply critical of the previous Minister's record. But, after six months as Environment Minister, Clement's initial promises have so far faded into thin air instead of real action.

Lois Corbett, TEA's Executive Director, worries that Ontario's smog may only continue to worsen under Minister Clement. "I have heard lots of good intentions from the Minister, but have seen very little action. He

promises to shake up the Ontario Smog Plan but has allowed Ontario Hydro to increase smog and mercury emissions at the Lakeview Generating Station in Mississauga, by an unbelievable sixty-seven percent."

More bad news for the environment is raining on Clement's parade. His environment ministry will take another 5% funding cut this year, adding to the millions slashed during the previous term. The moratorium on bulk water taking, announced by the Tories during their election campaign, was lifted one week after the Minister was handed the environment portfolio. To compound the outrage, the public wasn't informed until November that new water permits have been handed out since June.

Environmentalists and the public are eagerly awaiting tough legislation that would stop US shipments of haz-



TEA's Executive Director Lois Corbett, meets with provincial Environment Minister Tony Clement to talk about Ontario's smog problem.

ardous waste into Ontario. But the immediate action promised by the government has failed to materialize. Instead, a new polluting PCB incinerator has been approved for construction in Cornwall even though safer alternatives exist. In the future, Ontario may even become the new destination for the destruction of the world's stockpile of PCBs.

TEA will be monitoring the Minister's actions closely and will insist on full public

participation in all new policies, programs and implementation plans. Previous efforts to "update" environmental regulations were a disaster, leading to Ontario becoming a haven for hazardous waste haulers from America. ☘

AT THE MEETING WITH CLEMENT, TEA DISCUSSED A NUMBER OF ISSUES:

- The Minister stressed plans to update all of Ontario's Environmental Laws, including air quality pesticides, and water regulations, as his top priority.
- **ON SMOG**, the Minister solicited our views on the much maligned Provincial Smog Plan. Our concerns about the industry dominated decision-making process lead to a follow-up meeting with the Minister and senior Ministry staff which has already generated changes in Smog Plan Committee composition.
- **ON WASTE**, we focussed on Producer Responsibility, noting that Ontario is the only jurisdiction where producers and packagers bear no responsibility for waste, and that Ontario is one of two provinces without a deposit system for bottles and cans. Despite this, the Minister's actions to date have been very disappointing. (See attached article on the Waste Diversion Organization.)
- **PESTICIDES** were also discussed. Here the Minister felt that our proposal for new legislation to allow municipalities like Toronto to ban the cosmetic use of pesticides, is the kind of measure that could be considered in the re-evaluation of Ontario's laws.
- We also exchanged views on PCBs and HOSPITAL WASTE INCINERATORS in Toronto.

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Use TEA's expertise to get your group or yourself involved in protecting the environment -- TEA offers workshops on -- media training -- how to talk to city hall -- and many environmental issues.

Storm Warning

by Shelley Petrie

Every time it rains in Toronto, it pours thousands of tonnes of chemically contaminated water and bacteria directly into Lake Ontario.

When you wash pollution off your car, the soapy water runs down your driveway and directly into Toronto's storm sewers.

Any pesticides or fertilizers on your neighbor's lawn follows that same path after rain.

And when we have a downpour, our storm sewers overflow, mixing with Toronto's other sewers, sending a bacteria cocktail out into the Lake that washes back on our beaches.

The result? Contaminated aquatic life, fish consumption advisories, closed beaches and degraded drinking water.

BETTER WEATHER AHEAD

City Council's new Wet Weather Flow Master Plan Steering Committee wants to reduce and prevent water pollution. The committee, Toronto's own outdoor plumbers, includes Shelley Petrie of TEA and other citizens, environmental and watershed groups and government officials.

While a major culprit is the engineered design of Toronto's sewer system, the committee will also push innovative, grassroots solutions to avoid unnecessary construction costs.

Toronto needs to adopt source control policies for chemical pollutants. The city's phase out of pesticides

on parks is a great example. Now we need your help to protect Toronto's drinking water and beaches...

★ **Phone your councillor in support of the proposed Sewer Use By-law.** It reduces the amount of toxic substances industry can dump into the sewer system;

★ **Support city funding to disconnect downspouts on homes and buildings;**

★ **Support a summer water use by-law** that helps residents use water wisely and keep the quality of drinking water high;

★ **Spread sand, not salt, on walkways and driveways during the winter months.** The chlorides in road salt are highly toxic to vegetation and aquatic life;

★ **Maintain your lawn and garden without the use of toxic products like diazinon.** Call TEA to contact a local organic lawn care company;

★ **Wash your car at a local shop instead of the driveway.** This way harmful pollutants hosed off your car or present in the detergent will go into the sewer system for treatment and not your nearby stormwater grate; and,

★ **Don't repave your driveway or walkway.** There are many alternatives that allow rain and snow to seep into the ground instead of carrying nutrients and toxics in runoff to nearby streams and creeks.

Check out the city's web site to keep updated on the Steering Committees' progress. 🌱

SHELLEY PETRIE represents TEA on the City's Wet Weather Flow Master Plan Steering Committee

WHAT'S IN TORONTO'S WATER?

Sewer pipes direct water used in household toilets, dishwashers, washing machines and industrial operations to Toronto's 5 wastewater plants where it is treated before it is released to Lake Ontario.

Stormwater pipes, on the other hand, catch water from rain storms, lawn watering, home car washing, and snow melts. Open storm grates are visible throughout your neighborhood that connect to this system. The pipes dump the runoff directly into Toronto streams, rivers and Lake Ontario. If you dump paint down a storm grate or pesticides runoff from your lawn, this is its fate.

Combined sewers also exist in Toronto where the stormwater pipes are in fact also the sewer pipes. Water flowing through these pipes goes to a treatment plant.

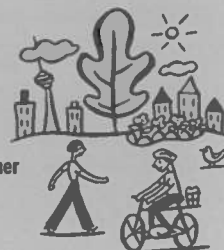
THE POLLUTION PROBLEM

During storms and rapid snow melting periods Toronto's sewer and stormwater system fails in a number of ways:

- ★ **Clean water and waste water flows combine, dumping sewage and toxic contaminants into the local waterways**
- ★ **Rain and snow flow into the sewer pipes and are needlessly treated**
- ★ **Pipe capacity is exceeded and sewers back up on streets, in home basements and in downtown office buildings**
- ★ **Contaminants on industrial and residential lands wash off into the nearest storm sewer and are carried directly to Toronto rivers, creeks and Lake Ontario**
- ★ **Paved surfaces, about 40% of Toronto's landmass, prevent rain water from soaking into the ground and carry pesticides and other contaminants to the closest water body or storm sewer**

get involved in the *tea* community
volunteers are a great help!

- update our membership database
- join a TEA issue caucus
- join the TEA leaves production team we need writers and stamp likers
- translate TEA information & materials into other languages
- volunteer to be TEA's volunteer coordinator





Environmentalists Urge Caution on Using Sewage Sludge as a Fertilizer

by Shelley Petrie

Please, wipe your feet. And if Toronto City Council okays plans to turn Toronto's sewage sludge into a fertilizer, spread on city parks and, bagged for your lawn and garden, you'll want to. Ontario farmers may also use our sludge to grow those fresh vegetables you stop to pick up for dinner, at your corner green grocer.

Recycling sewage sludge into a soil enhancer is environmental progress. It enables Toronto to finally shut down the polluting Ashbridges Bay incinerator. So, why is TEA concerned?

All local industries are connected to Toronto's municipal sewer system. Mercury, lead, cadmium, and other heavy metals are dumped directly into the sewer system and end up in the sludge. Dioxin, PCBs and various endocrine disruptors have been detected in Toronto's sludge. With each fertilizer application, these toxics build up in backyard soils and farmers' fields.

TEA is also concerned that the public may not know of the City's plans. The US Environmental Protection Agency has determined that home use is the biggest exposure pathway to children from toxic compounds in sewage sludge. Use on food crops is the largest exposure route to the general public.

Unfortunately, our city councillors are ignoring our pleas for caution. Recommendations that guide the appropriate use of sewage sludge brought to the Public Works Committee in November, were voted down.

The Dirty Details...

PART OF THE PROBLEM IS CONTRADICTIONARY RULES.

The Works Department wants to pelletize Toronto's sewage sludge and classify as a fertilizer under the federal Fertilizer Act, a dramatic departure from past uses of sewage sludge. Historically, in Ontario, recycled municipal sewage sludge consists of a semi-liquid cake, applied to land under strict and controlled provincial guidelines. Only eight tonnes per hectare of sludge can be applied to lands over a five year period. The build up of heavy metal content in soil is continuously monitored and application is stopped when limits outlined in the guidelines are reached. Common land applications of sewage cake include reclamation areas, mine tailings and landfill covers and some non-food crops.

But when you use the federal definition where that sludge becomes a fertilizer, applications are allowed for all land uses, including, home lawn and gardens and for food crops. Although pathogen risks are greatly reduced in dried pellets, public concern has arisen since fertilizer use is not monitored or limited by the

federal government and soil tests to determine increases in heavy metal content and toxic compounds is not required. Furthermore, because sludge pellets are low in nitrogen (only 5%) the Canadian Food Inspection Agency that oversees the Fertilizer Act, expects these pellets to be applied in higher amounts -- speeding up the accumulation of toxic substances in Ontario soils.

The Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) is reviewing new studies which conclude that sewage sludge may be a leading source of mercury to the environment in North America (ranked as the third highest source in CCME's Canada-Wide Standards documents). If Ontario municipalities double or triple land application of sludge, sewage sludge may become the largest emitter of mercury to the environment, in Canada.

Environment Canada is investigating concerns around dioxin and is conducting research to determine human and wildlife risk from exposure to endocrine disruptors in sludge, such as Bis-phenyl-A – present in high amounts in Toronto's sludge.

Opposition to unrestricted sludge use in the US is exploding. The US EPA has been hauled in front of Congress to defend whether US sludge rules adequately protect public health. Citizens there have blamed the spreading of sewage sludge on livestock deaths.

WRITE THE MAYOR

Write Mayor Mel Lastman about your concerns. There are many uses for sludge that can limit the public's exposure to its toxic brew, so far the city has chosen not to rule out any options. Toronto plans to begin pelletizing sludge in 2001. Given the above revelations TEA will continue to work with the public to demand the city take a second look at the project.

tea RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Shut down the Ashbridges Bay incinerator
- Apply the following restrictions to Toronto's sludge use, until it is toxic-free
- No home lawn and garden use
- No agricultural food crop use
- No unlimited application of sludge pellets. All sludge must be applied under existing Ontario Guidelines
- Continue existing government monitoring of heavy metals and toxic chemicals on soils receiving Toronto sewage sludge pellets, and
- Respect rural municipal by-laws that oppose land application of sludge within their borders.

SHELLEY PETRIE works on water and waste issues at TEA.

WRITE THE MAYOR:

Mayor Mel Lastman
Mayor's Office, Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Fax: (416) 395-6440
(remember to cc TEA)

ENTERTAIN A FRIEND WHILE DONATING TO TEA!

Proceeds from a performance of a new Toronto play — *Archer* — will kindly be donated to TEA. Playwriter, Philip Sheppard, is donating half the proceeds to TEA from the Saturday night performance on Jan 8. The show runs January 6-23, 2000. The play tells two stories that converge in a rollicking mix of mythic endurance, suburban comedy and highway drama. *ARCHER* is produced by Physikal Theater & directed by Steven Rumbelow. Starring Leanne Dioxin, Alison Lawrence & Philip Sheppard, *ARCHER* is playing at The Theatre Centre, 1032 Queen Street West (1 block west of Ossington). For more information or reservations call 538-0988.

Canadian Oil Company Criticized For Polluting Rainforests

by Janet May

The recent kidnapping and release of eight Canadian oil workers and four international aid workers in the north-eastern Ecuadorian jungle made headlines around the world. The kidnappings occurred close to the site where City Investing Co. operates – a Canadian oil company owned by Alberta Oil and Energy. The four aid workers were released shortly after their ordeal began and told reporters that the kidnappers primary concerns are the plight of the people living in the communities around the operations of City Investing Co.

Kidnapping cannot be condoned as a way to redress the wrongs perpetrated on communities. Still, the story behind the headlines dramatizes real terror in the jungle, this time perpetrated by the oil company.

Amazon oil patches sprung up 25 years ago. Little has been done by either the foreign-owned oil corporations or the Ecuadorian government to compensate communities for the environmental damage or to undertake remediation actions that would protect the health of communities and the rainforest. As Gonzalo Lopez, the Bishop of the affected province points out, "for many years the population has been taken hostage by being abandoned".

What exactly is happening in the Ecuadorian rainforest? Joining Accion

Ecologica, which has been monitoring and documenting the health problems and environmental degradation caused by the unregulated activities of foreign oil companies, TEA's Keith Stewart and

Janet May witnessed the destruction first hand on a visit to Ecuador. Phaedra Morris, a student at Trent University, also worked in the region for six months with members of the affected communities and has recently returned to Canada with an extensive report of the impacts of oil exploitation by City Investing Company.



Some of the environmental offences and health consequences include:

- Dumping 4-6 tankers of crude oil into a marsh every night. When asked what is being dumped, workers for City Investing Company claim it is just rain water. City Investing Co has now covered the area with sand and ferns but the oil still bubbles out along the edges of the marsh;
- A pasture owned by Don Luis Gaibor, a local farmer hides an oil slick that is a metre deep and covers six hectares. For twenty years, Don Gaibor has asked City Investing to clean up his property but the answer is always the same and the company does not have enough money for the job;
- Bathing in and drinking contaminated water has left local residents with burning itchy and discoloured skin, fungal diseases, anemia, kidney failure, respiratory infections and increased incidence of miscarriages and stillbirths.

These few examples do not adequately describe the terrible situation that is normal, daily life for poverty-stricken farmers and

indigenous communities in the Ecuadorian rainforest.

Accion Ecologica is asking Canadian people to "think about the problems of the Amazon region and its people, about the agony that these fragile ecosystems and their peoples are suffering in full view of the whole world."

ACTIONS...

There is much more that Canadians can do. People owning shares in Alberta Energy Company, the parent company of City Investing Co., can write to the Board of Directors demanding clean-up of the Ecuadorian site and adherence to more stringent Canadian oil extraction standards at international sites. Most importantly, we must reduce our consumption of fossil fuels, since North American demand pushes continued oil exploration in fragile eco-systems.

JANET MAY is TEA's Ecuador Caucus support staff.



TEA's Ecuador Caucus JANET MAY and KEITH STEWART meet up with Accion Ecologica member and former TEA campaigner GERARD COFFEY in Quito, Ecuador.



Oil exploration residue from Canadian company seeping into communities in Ecuador's rainforest.

BECOME A PART OF TEA

TEA has many volunteers who work with us everyday or come to our regular meetings. Get involved by giving us a call or work on an issue that interests you. In the office call...

LOIS CORBETT, Executive Director
JANET MAY, Pesticide Reduction Caucus
GORD PERKS, Waste Reduction Caucus
ED DRASS, Rocket Riders Caucus
JOAN DOIRON, Environmentalists Plan Transportation
SHELLEY PETRIE, Water Caucus
RICH WHATE, Toxics
JASON SIMPSON & LAURA MITCHELL, Youth Caucus
KEITH STEWART, Smog and Climate Change Caucus (416) 596-0660





The Wet/Dry Recycling System by Gord Perks

Modelled after tremendous success in Guelph, Ontario, Toronto's Wet/Dry program would change the way waste is collected and processed. Instead of many different collection programs (Blue Box, Grey Box, garbage) the wet/dry system involves only one pick-up. The wet and dry materials are sorted in the home. All dry materials go in one box or bag (basically Blue Box plus) and all kitchen-waste, yard-waste, and other wet material (such as cat litter) go into a clear bag. The two different bags are picked up on the same day in a truck with two compartments.

A clear bag is recommended to keep the waste streams clean. When this was introduced in Guelph, inspectors travelled with recycling trucks and conducted spot checks. Households that missorted materials received advice on how to avoid future problems. Clean streams are very important. Contaminants can spoil compost quality and make it difficult to market. Wet material interferes with dry material sorting.

TEA and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) brought the plan forward now, because the city is putting out a call for tenders for private companies to handle Toronto's garbage. Not surprisingly, the main proposals that came forward are mega-dumps and giant garbage incinerators. Also, the private sector proposals promise to be expensive. When compared to the expected price for these options, the CUPE/ TEA plan will save the City 28 million dollars per year.

This fits with the long standing position of TEA that waste diversion is much more economically sensible than disposal. It should be obvious that dumping or burning the highly processed materials that are in our waste stream is less efficient than sorting them for recycling. The economic benefits don't stop with cost savings. On top of the nearly \$600 million saving over twenty years our plan will create over 800 jobs in sorting and composting facilities.


Included in the cost estimates for our plan is an expenditure of \$200 million to build

seven wet/dry sorting facilities. After picking up the wet and dry bags in a single truck they are delivered to one of the facilities. Each facility will have a composting plant for the wet material and a recyclable sorting plant for the dry. The composting facility in Guelph produces a clean compost, which is currently being sold for \$20/tonne. Importantly, the odour from the plant is minimal – simply an earthy smell.

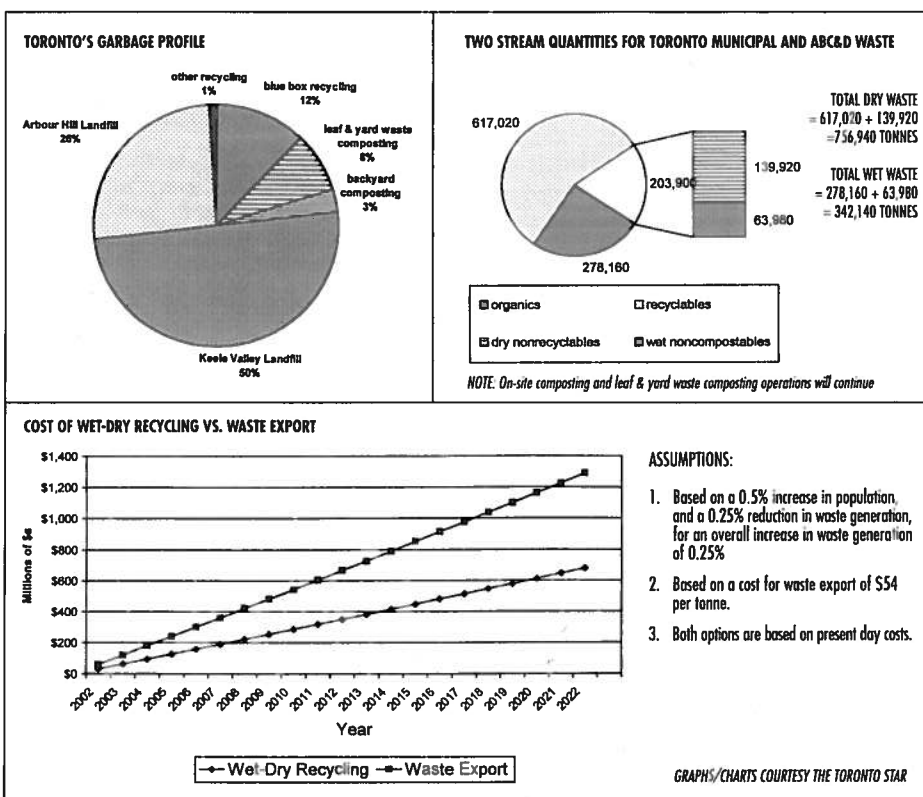
The dry sorting plants are called Material Recycling Facilities (MRFs – pronounced murfs.) The majority of the new jobs would be. The plants use a combination of mechanical and hand sorting. Recyclable materials are pulled out and marketed. One virtue of this

approach is as new markets are developed for recyclable materials, workers in the plant can change what they pull out.

This means that householders are not constantly receiving new instructions about what goes in Blue and Grey Boxes.

Anything left over from this plant goes to disposal. However, there will be far less dump-bound material than there is in the current system. With current Blue and Grey Box recycling less than 15% of Toronto's waste is diverted. Add another 10% that is currently composted, and only 1/4 of the waste is diverted. Under the Wet/Dry proposal we could achieve 75%. 

GORD PERKS works on waste reduction issues at TEA.



INNISFIL CITIZENS DEFEAT GARBAGE INCINERATOR THAT WOULD BURN TORONTO TRASH ... A VICTORY FOR THE TOWN AND TORONTO

Incinerators have been heavily criticized as outdated technologies that pollute the environment with cancer-causing chemicals such as dioxin and toxic heavy metals like lead and mercury.

An incinerator in Niagara Falls, USA was also dropped from Toronto's short list of garbage disposal options. A new disposal facility for Toronto will be chosen by the City in 2000.



Preventing Cancer in Toronto: TEA Works to Eliminate Cancer-causing Toxic Substances at Source

by Dr. Keith Stewart, Ph.D

Cancer takes an enormous toll on the lives of Ontarians. One in three will get cancer at some point in their lifetime and one in four will die from it. It affects those who have it and their loved ones in profound, often agonizing ways. It is also the most expensive disease for our medical system to treat, costing over a billion dollars annually. Cancer is, in the vast majority of cases, a preventable disease yet cancer policy has focused efforts and resources on treatment.

Preventing cancer by cleaning up our workplaces and communities is the focus of TEA's work with the occupational and environmental carcinogens working groups of the Toronto Cancer Prevention Coalition. TEA is working with other environmental groups, labour organizations and municipal health officials to develop and implement a comprehensive set of action plans at the municipal level.

"If cancer were an easy disease to treat, and if treatment were highly effective, there might be some sense in investing the vast majority of the resources within the 'cancer envelope' in treatment. However, treatment for most advanced cancers is not curative, though it can contribute to a better quality of life; but even when treatment is curative, it is never easy or free of morbidity. Hence it is appropriate to invest in cancer prevention."

(ONTARIO TASK FORCE ON THE PRIMARY PREVENTION OF CANCER)

The decision of the environmental and occupational working groups to develop a joint strategy came out of two key insights:

1 POLLUTION PREVENTION SHOULD START AT THE SOURCE. The workplace is a major source of environmental carcinogens. If we can change the production processes and materials we use to manufacture goods and services, redesign products to be less toxic, and institute systems of producer responsibility for the product's full life-cycle, then we will protect the health of both the workers and the surrounding community.

2 CONCERN ABOUT THE RELATIVE NEGLECT OF OCCUPATIONAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS IN ONTARIO CANCER POLICY. The proposed strategic plan for the provincial body which deals with cancer (Cancer Care Ontario) mentions occupational carcinogens only once and doesn't define a role for itself or propose any actions for dealing with them. Environmental carcinogens (other than ultraviolet radiation) are not even mentioned.

Most of what we know about what causes cancer has been learned by studying workers overexposed to toxic substances. According to scientist Peter Infante, "Blue-collar workers appear to be the canaries in our society for identifying human chemical carcinogens in the general environment." Workers often face acute exposures, but once created in the workplace toxic substances such as dioxin, PCBs, and benzene soon find their way into the environment.

There is a great deal of evidence linking the increasing number of people getting cancer in Ontario and elsewhere to the onset of the 'chemical revolution' in the 1940s and 1950s. There are now approximately 75,000 new chemicals, never tested for negative health effects, in everyday use. The increase in childhood cancer is particularly alarming. Cancer rates among Canadian children less than 15 years in age have increased by about 25 percent in the last 25 years, with the highest rates among children who are less than 5 years of age. Cancer is now the second major cause of death for children, whose growing bodies are particularly vulnerable to low-level environmental exposures.

"The lifestyle of toddlers has not changed much over the past half century. Young children do not smoke, drink alcohol or hold stressful jobs.... Children do however, receive a greater dose of whatever chemicals are in the air, food and water because, pound for pound, they breathe, eat, and drink more than adults do."

SANDRA STEINGRABER, AUTHOR OF "LIVING DOWNSTREAM"

continued on Page 9...

CHEMICAL COCKTAILS, ANYONE?

Lawn care pesticides are ending up in Toronto's waters. An Environment Canada study released by TEA found the following pesticides/herbicides in Toronto's Don and Humber Rivers.

POSTHIDE	BRAND NAME
Diazinon	Bug-B-Gon
Basudin 2, 4-D	Killax
Mecoprop	Par III
Dicamba	Weed-B-Gone

TEA Wants Council To Dump Kirkland Lake Disposal Option

Too bad Notre Development Corporation and Canada Waste executives don't count sheep in their sleep -- otherwise the lofty dream of throwing Toronto's trash into a giant open pit mine in Kirkland Lake, may never have seen the light of day. In reality, this is a potential nightmare for the environment that refuses to go away.

Residents of the Northern community have been fighting Toronto's trash for 10 years. The new Mayor was elected because of his outspoken opposition. The local MPP sponsored a referendum on this issue -- over 90% of residents said no to the garbage dump and no to Toronto. The Adam's Mine Intervention Coalition tried fighting the environmental assessment of the site in Court.

"We have numerous concerns about the landfill design and the release of leachate into the surrounding watershed which flows through a large farming area and forms the headwaters of the Ottawa River system," warns Brennain Lloyd a member of the Coalition. Leachate is the toxic "garbage soup" which is formed when water percolates through the wastes at a dumpsite. "The Adams Mine site will produce over 300 million litres of leachate per year."

What pushes the Kirkland Lake proposal into the realm of fantasy is the requirement for Notre Development and Canada Waste to provide leachate containment operations for 1000 years after the dump closes.

The environmental consequences of dumping Toronto's garbage into the mine may be disastrous.

Toronto needs to adopt a waste management system that does not leave a legacy of pollution or inhibit the city's ability to reduce the amount of waste it produces. Moving forward with a Wet/Dry recycling and composting system will eliminate the city's need to rely on old style disposal technology. ♻

BRENNAIN LLOYD works with Northwatch, in North Bay, Ontario: (705) 497 0373 or nwatch@onlink.net

DIAL OLA & GO PESTICIDE FREE...That's (416) 596-7989

by Janet May

Every spring and summer, TEA's phones ring off the hook. It seems Toronto residents want to follow the City's lead and go pesticide-free at home. So every winter, TEA gets prepared and compiles the names of organic lawn care companies and landscapers that offer safe alternatives to managing your yard instead using toxic pesticides. Thanks to you this list has grown into the Ontario Landscape Alliance or OLA -- green businesses that can compete in the real world.

HOLA, OLA

This Spring, TEA and World Wildlife Fund brought together businesses offering organic landscaping services to form a non-profit trade association that would promote non-toxic horticulture. We reasoned that a

critical mass of like-minded businesses could eventually embark on co-marketing campaigns and bulk purchases of products like organic fertilizers. In time, these cost reductions would be passed on to the consumer, making organic landscaping services more price competitive with the traditional spray-and-pray programs offered by the average pesticide companies.

Throughout the 1999 growing season, a series of six "Curbside Breakfasts" was held in different Toronto neighbourhoods. The free breakfasts were about an hour and a half long and concentrated on one specific aspect of organic landscaping. Topics ranged from landscaping with native plants to creating healthy soil to organic control of the scourge of urban lawns - the beetle grub. All of the speakers

were great, the event locations were excellent examples of organic landscapes and the sun shone at every breakfast.

The "Curbside Breakfasts" were successful because of the great work done by Colleen Cirillo, event organizer extraordinaire.

ACTION CIRCLE: OLA has presently found a home at TEA. Call 596-7989 for information about organic lawn care companies and landscapers and to find out how to join OLA. ☘

JANET MAY works at TEA to reduce urban pesticide use in Toronto.



ACTION ALERT !!!

CITY COUNCIL NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT

One way to clean Toronto's sewage sludge and protect our drinking water quality is to support Council's plans to toughen its Industrial Sewer Use By-law.

Like homes, Toronto industries are also hooked up to the city's underground sewer maze. Companies that use or produce toxic substances during their operations inevitably flush certain amounts of these chemicals into the system. Mercury from your neighbourhood dentist, oil, and grease from autoshops and other metals and chemicals from a wide-range of industries are directed to a sewage treatment plant or during storms, spill into nearby rivers and out to Lake Ontario.

The city wants to reduce the amount of toxic substances industries are allowed to flush.

Companies that discharge toxic substances will also be required to produce a pollution prevention (P2) plan for these substances and will receive support from the federal, provincial and municipal governments to accomplish the city's goals. Some industries may even be motivated to replace a toxic product with an alternative.

Clean sewers produce clean sewage sludge. If Toronto wants to spread sludge on Ontario lands it must clean up the sewers first.

Council will vote on the By-law this spring. Some industries are lobbying to defeat or water down the By-law. Phone your local Councillor or Mayor Mel Lastman and have your vote counted.

PHONE MEL: 416-395-6464

Download a copy of Toronto's Draft Sewer use By-law from the City's website:
<http://www.city.toronto.on.ca>

1999's Big Polluters Honoured by Environmentalists

by Rich Whate

At TEA's annual **Environmental Bullshit Awards**, Toronto greens took a night off from the good fight to jeer corporate advertising with their funny bones.

Ecobunk turns the tables on corporate "green" advertising to expose the colors of greed. The event is held each year to educate and humor the public about the mixed messages polluters send when they preach care and respect for the environment in their advertisements.

The Aluminum Marketing Council sells recycled pop cans as environmentally-friendly and socially conscious, but omits the fact that beluga whales in the St. Lawrence River are dying of aluminum-related tumours. TEA thinks the public should view this behaviour as shameless, shocking, brazen, and even reprehensible. Ecobunk uses laughter to accomplish.

"A lot of corporate advertising shows a deplorable disregard for serious and destructive environmental problems," says Lois Corbett, Executive Director of TEA. "Fortunately, it's also easy material to de-bunk. You can still take clean water and air seriously and laugh — a lot."

Sam Foster has calculated that he can better protect the environment by driving not walking. This ad from Saturn was nominated under the "Save The World, Go Shopping" award. The Fur Council of Canada wants to be "your eyes and ears on the land", and was a top contender for the "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" award. Regis Filmon's over-the-top popular, *How To Be A Millionaire*, gameshow was dubbed, *How To Be An Ecobunkaire*, and became the highlight of the night.

"The annual event is now a big mainstream hit," says Corbett. "Students, educators, politicians, and even lawyers, cram themselves into seats. Past award winners like Ontario Hydro, Monsanto or Shell, have yet to reserve a table, but perhaps next year at Eco Bunk's tenth anniversary."

Ecobunk is usually held near the first of December. To receive an invitation to next year's awards ceremony, call TEA, 596-0660.



"FIGHTING BACK MAKES A DIFFERENCE"

New CAW contracts protect workers and our environment by Rich Whate

Good news travels fast. The contracts signed recently between the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) and the Big 3 Automakers — Ford, DaimlerChrysler and General Motors — made headlines around the world with unprecedented wage increases, benefits and other measures to protect workers. The media paid little attention, however, to the significant environmental gains reached in the agreements. These gains reflect a long-time commitment of the CAW to protect our environment, and they set a new standard of pollution prevention and worker health and safety for other employers to follow.

The environmental gains in the CAW contract include:

- prohibiting 14 toxic substances, most of which are carcinogens, from entering any of the Big 3 workplaces. This means that, in addition to limiting toxic exposures to workers, auto plants will reduce pollution from substances like PCBs, perchlorethylene and vinyl chloride;
- increasing the time that environmental reps can do environment work at or on behalf of their workplaces. CAW environment representatives have been instrumental in encouraging pollution prevention in their plants and communities like London and Toronto; and
- for all products supplied to Ford, the prohibition of any products of endangered species as defined by the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

The CAW agreement is important for, among other things, recognizing the responsibility of companies to prevent pollution and for allowing workers to contribute to making this happen.

Here in Toronto, it is crucial that the City of Toronto and other employers follow the lead of the CAW and the Big 3 by reaching binding — not voluntary — agreements to reduce environmental pollution and occupational health risks. Substituting chemicals like perchlorethylene for safer alternatives and cleaning up toxic stockpiles of PCBs will both reduce pollution and protect the health of workers, who are usually the first exposed to such hazards.

Within the City of Toronto, success stories already exist. TEA and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) are collaborating with City staff to phase out pesticides, and to look at workable solutions to our waste problem. This complements TEA's role in the Toronto Cancer Prevention Coalition, where we are working with many sectors of the community to target cancer-causing substances as a priority for pollution prevention. We also have a proven record of reducing greenhouse gases with support from the Toronto Atmospheric Fund.

TEA has a long history of challenging decision-makers in Toronto to commit to environmental and health protection, and are collaborating with workers, industry and citizens to find solutions. We hope that, like the CAW-Big 3 contract, we will see real leadership in City Hall and in our business community to deliver long-term solutions to environmental challenges.

RICH WHATE works at TEA on Toxics issues.

Preventing Cancer in Toronto

...continued from Page 7

A 1993 Ministry of Environment and Energy report identified 20 substances present in the Ontario environment that were found to be hazardous, 15 of which were known or probable human carcinogens as identified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer. Toronto's air, water and soil have been found to have elevated level of a wide variety of known or suspected carcinogens.

"Occupational and environmental exposures to carcinogens are a major environmental health problem" says Rich Whate, Chair of the Environmental Working Group of the Toronto Cancer Prevention Coalition. "Community and labour groups have an opportunity to work with our municipal government in order to make Toronto a leader on cancer prevention."

TEA is on the Interim Steering Committee of the Toronto Cancer Prevention Coalition.

KEITH STEWART is researcher for the Environmental and Occupational Working Groups of the Coalition.



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tea leaves

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A Bill of Rights for TTC Rocket Riders?

by Ed Drass

Joining over one million Torontonians, members of TEA's Transit User Group, **The Rocket Riders**, help 'spare the air' by riding the city's trains and rails everyday. An improved public transit system will lure even more drivers out of their cars. Some of the best advice to enhance service comes from transit users and the Rocket Riders are helping fellow riders participate in decisions made by the TTC and GO Transit. The Riders are taking this message onto subways, and to the media and politicians.

BETTER SERVICE CAMPAIGN

The Rocket Rider's Better Service Campaign entails:

- a **TTC Rider Bill of Rights**;
- **improved schedule adherence, starting with downtown streetcar lines**; and,
- a **decrease in escalator shut downs**.

After the Riders completed a preliminary escalator survey, TTC Chair Howard Moscoe brought the results to a recent TTC meeting. The Commission has now implemented an action plan to reduce the number of unscheduled calls/repairs. "The problem seems to have abated, but the Riders will continue to monitor the

improvements," says Gord Perks, spokesperson for the group.

Next, the Riders plan to examine the quality of service on the Queen and King streetcar lines, and will make the findings public with recommendations to improve this local service for transit passengers. The Rocket Riders will also champion the **Rider's Bill of Rights**, proposed by TTC commissioner Joe Mihevc. The Bill gives TTC patrons a formal list of expectations for service, safety and courtesy. Additional TTC issues, such as suitable replacement for the Time line service, seating on new subway cars and the Queen 501 Proof-of-Payment system will also be tackled.

Rocket Riders also supports the efforts of other city councillors to have parking revenues directed to the TTC. We will continue to try to convince Mayor Lastman about the benefits of having motorists help defray transit costs, as it is in their interest to keep TTC riders out of cars.

Thanks to Jim Drass the group now has a web site. Check it out at www.rocketriders.org and use the links page for GTA transit info. Those interested in helping on transit issues should contact rocketriders@yahoo.com.

Rocket Rider ED DRASS is chair of TEA's Transit User Group and a member of TEA's Board of Directors.

tea PUBLICATIONS

PAMPHLETS & FACTSHEETS

NEW - TEA BISCUITS
Newsletter by TEA's Youth Caucus. FREE

NEW - Health Care Without Harm Factsheets:
Information of environmentally-friendly, non-toxic hospital products. FREE

NEW - Go Pesticide Free:
Pamphlet also available in Cantonese. FREE

NEW - SMOG ALERT!
How to protect yourself and reduce emissions. FREE

NEW - "Our Changing Climate" Junior Level Curriculum Unit: A curriculum unit on climate change designed for teachers of junior-level students.

Return to Re-Use: A look at deposit-return systems to reduce waste and save taxpayers money. FREE

User Pay: User pay for residential garbage neither reduces waste nor saves money - find out the better alternatives. FREE

Pesticide-Free Zone Kit: A series of factsheets outlining alternatives to lawns and alternatives to pesticides; also provides tips on how to talk to your neighbours. \$3.00

Green Lawns: A guide to environmentally-friendly lawn care. FREE

VIDEOS

Growing Like a Weed: Explores the issue of urban pesticide use and possible health effects caused by these chemicals. Also illustrates chemical-free lawn care. \$15.00

Great Lakes - Great Lawns: Views from community activists and homeowners around the Great Lakes basin and their efforts and successes in eliminating pesticide use. \$15.00

Auto Domination - Avenues of Change: Backgrounder on current transportation issues and sustainable alternatives. \$15.00

REPORTS

NEW - What's Wrong with Ontario's Smog Plan? FREE

NEW - Key Findings on Ground-Level Ozone: Health and Smog Report. FREE

NEW - City of Toronto Smog Report Card. FREE

NEW - Green Jobs and A Green Future: A new waste management plan for Toronto by TEA and CUPE.

Moving Up the Ladder: The place of re-use and refill in Canadian waste management strategies. \$15.00

Curbing Curbside Toxics: An examination of the GTA's 3Rs Analysis. \$15.00

The Green Grocer's Guide to Waste Reduction: How to conduct a waste audit, practice source reduction and establish re-use and recycling measures. \$15.00

WEB SITES

NEW - TEA site: torontoenvironment.org

NEW - TEA Youth Caucus: geocities.com/teayouth



Youth @ TEA: What We're Up To... by Laura Mitchell and Jason Simpson

TEA's Youth Action Group is alive and kicking! If you recently jogged past a group of young people cleaning up garbage and recyclables in the BeltLine Park near Davisville and Yonge, than you've seen us in action. Our goal for this year is to take a more active role in the environment than we have in the past.

Since the birth of the **Youth Action Group** in 1998, we have done a clean-up in Taylor Creek, an information canvass about pesticides, helped organize two events with the **David Suzuki Foundation**, and participated in a Great Lakes United citizen hearing on Great Lakes water quality. Last spring, we created our very own newsletter, which we called "**TEA Biscuits**". In the newsletter, Youth Action Group members discuss what we

are doing and briefly touch on local environmental issues. A second issue of **TEA biscuits** is now in the works.

We have several ideas for action in the future. They include information canvasses, more park clean-ups, and demonstrations throughout the city. The **TEA Youth Action Group** has recently acquired its own website. We hope to eventually have information on the site about upcoming meetings/actions, a report on what we have done, and we will post each issue of **TEA Biscuits** as they are completed. We are also working on factsheets aimed at young people that will be put on the site for easy access. Feel free to check out our website. The address is www.geocities.com/teayouth

We are always looking for new members

and ideas/suggestions, and we are offering to help other local environmental youth groups by providing information and by notifying them of our events. If you are interested in joining **TEA's Youth Action Group** or you would like help with your group, contact Jason or Laura at 596-0660 or email teayouth@yahoo.com.

LAURA MITCHELL and JASON SIMPSON are co-op students from **East York Collegiate** working at TEA for the year.

TEA'S CLEAN AIR CHALLENGE

by Ali Hayes

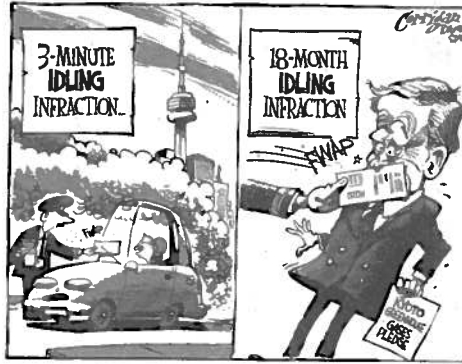
It is easy to see why Toronto's air is often yellow and brown.

An astonishing 2.4 million cars, trucks, and other vehicles are driven into the city each day. But, all these tailpipes don't rest when drivers arrive at their destination. The majority of Toronto drivers spend part of their day idling. The Clean Air Challenge will help Torontonians remember to protect the air they breathe before they get behind the wheel.

Fact: Pick up and delivery trucks may spend up to 40% of the time in Toronto idling -- that is 2 and a half hours a day!

When cars burn gas they release carbon dioxide (CO₂) which contributes to global warming and changes in worldwide weather patterns. Every time a driver shuts the engine off they stop spewing CO₂ and smog causing chemicals into the air. But, studies

have exposed that few drivers make a connection between their driving habits and smog and climate change. They don't realize that making small adjustments in the way they use their cars could be a step towards



improved air quality and the prevention of rising global temperatures.

TEA and the Toronto Clean Air Committee will challenge car dealerships, hotels and major employers within Toronto, to reduce their CO₂ emissions using anti-idling and ride together strategies.

An idling and a ride-together campaign will promote action among corporations, educators, youth, the government and the general public.

If all goes well Toronto will be a model for climate change programs across Canada. Everyone in Toronto can participate in the Clean Air Challenge by simply sharing a ride to work or turning the car off while waiting for a passenger.

So.....shut those engines OFF! ♻️

ALI HAYES is a member of TEA's Youth Caucus.

Ontario Short Changed by Business In Effort To Rescue The Blue Box Program

by Gord Perks

The Province has announced its new plan for diverting waste in Ontario. Sadly, it is largely a reannouncement of last year's flawed Waste Diversion Organization (WDO). Originally, the WDO was to require companies whose packages and products wind up in the Blue Box to pay half the annual \$46 million cost. Instead the government has got \$4 million for this year and \$4 million for next year from the provincially owned LCBO. There are some extra trimmings:

- \$500,000 from the paint industry to set up 5 - 10 household hazardous waste depots in the province;
- \$4 million from Corporations Supporting recycling to be split between a Blue Box efficiency study and promoting composting;
- \$1 million from the newspaper industry for advertisements to promote recycling.



Even worse the announcement creates a board of directors who will hand out the money. Seven seats go to industry, one to the Recycling Council of Ontario, and four to municipalities. The WDO Board will also attempt to negotiate a longer term solution within one year. Off the table for the year are provincially mandated Producer Responsibility programs such as reuse and deposit/return systems. Environment Minister Tony Clement responded to TEA's concerns by admitting that the program was a baby step. ♻️

GORD PERKS works on Waste Reduction issues at TEA.

Become
a Friend of
tea

You can contribute to **TEA's** work and the environment by making a donation. And because we are largely a volunteer organization every dollar goes a long way. **TEA** will keep you up to date on our accomplishments through **TEAleaves**, "What's Brewing Action Alerts" and our publications. Please check your donation below.

TEA does not have charitable status, therefore we cannot issue you a tax-deductible receipt.

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Please mail your cheque to: TEA, 30 Duncan Street, Suite 201, Toronto, ON M5V 2C3 tel. (416) 596-0660

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