

Online Environmental Defense Petition “letter to target

737 signatures as of June 4, 2024

Dear Minister Khanjin,

I am writing to you to ask that you require that Emerald’s waste incineration expansion project undergo an Individual Environmental Assessment.

Already, Emerald Energy from Waste’s incinerator is one of Brampton’s largest industrial emitters of nitrogen dioxide, a toxic air pollutant that causes asthma and chronic lung disease. It is located in a community that already suffers from polluted air. By the company’s own projections, the expanded facility would result in highly toxic dioxin and furan levels above the provincial guideline. Yet the company has not undertaken fulsome modelling of these dangerous emissions nor looked at the impacts on local plants, animals, soils and food sources. Dioxins and furans are persistent pollutants produced from waste burning, particularly the burning of plastics, and build up in ecosystems and food chains.

In addition to pollution concerns, incinerators (including energy-from-waste facilities) are an expensive and false solution to dealing with waste. They require a constant source of waste for years on end to amortize their huge cost, and therefore perversely promote waste generation. What’s more, data from the company suggests that three-quarters of the waste burned at Emerald is food and garden scraps, which should be composted; paper, metal and glass, which should be recycled; or plastics – which should not be burned in an incinerator because of the toxic emissions and greenhouse gases they generate.

Even the most technologically-advanced incinerators in the world generate pollution, including greenhouse gas emissions. Emerald contends that the massive waste-burning facility will be a source of “clean” energy, but claims that solid waste incineration is a form of “renewable” or “clean” energy have largely been debunked, as garbage is not a “renewable” source of energy. Incinerators have been found to emit more greenhouse gas emissions and other toxic air pollution per unit of electricity produced than fossil gas. In fact, generating more energy from garbage in Ontario will make our electricity grid dirtier than it already is.

Emerald Energy from Waste Inc. is currently undergoing a Streamlined Environmental Assessment Process to more than quadruple its capacity. If successful, the facility in Brampton would be the largest incineration facility in Canada, and one of the biggest in North America. It shocks me that this could happen without broad consultation with the local community and input from health and other experts about the impacts of the project, and alternatives to it.

I am calling on you, as the Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks, to require an Individual Environmental Assessment (EA) for this project so that all information

related to health and environmental impacts, and alternatives, can be taken into account.