

Binn Farm Newsletter, 1.12.09

Dear Binn Farm Campaigner,

According to today's Perthshire Advertiser (click [here](#)), SITA is now looking to change its plans at Binn Farm from conventional incineration to gasification. However despite all the hype about gasification being a safe alternative to incineration, in fact it has many of the same environmental and health issues as conventional incineration. Here is an extract from an American report (click [here](#) for full report):

Gasification shares many characteristics with incineration. At high temperatures used in incineration and gasification, toxic metals including cadmium and mercury, acid gases including hydrochloric acid, and ozone-forming nitrogen oxides are released. Also, dioxins and furans are created in the cooling process following the burning of ordinary paper and plastic. These poisons are dangerous at extremely low levels and modern pollution control devices do a poor job of reducing these emissions into the atmosphere. Some including mercury and dioxin are persistent and bioaccumulative; they resist breakdown in the environment and are concentrated in the food chain.

WASTE GASIFICATION, IMPACTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH, The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League

For further information about the dangers of gasification, Dr Jorge Emmanuel presents a very informative series of films on YouTube - click [here](#).

Any form of waste combustion, including gasification, tends to undermine recycling. Dumfries and Galloway Council has told residents not to bother sorting their waste. It all now goes to the EcoDeco Materials Reclamation Facility where it is turned into a fuel stock for the new gasification plant in Dumfries. Much of what is burnt consists of materials that could easily be recycled if there was the political will (e.g. yoghurt cartons and plastic fruit punnets). Friends of the Earth have calculated that recycling plastic saves 5 times as much energy as can be recovered by combustion processes.

In any case, the Council's policy of burning 60,000 tonnes of waste each year (see the [Strategic Outline Case](#)) is clearly out of step with Government policy of limiting incineration to 25% regionally and nationally.

In January 2007 Perth & Kinross Council signed up to Scotland's Climate Change Declaration, pledging to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from all of its services, including waste management. Incineration (and indeed any form of waste combustion) produces up to two tonnes of Co2 per tonne of waste - see page 5 of Peter Jones' report to Leicester City Council (click [here](#)).

Also, incinerating or gasifying 60,000 tonnes of waste each year could cost the Council up to £6.5 million more each year than using other, environmentally friendly methods of waste treatment - click [here](#) for details.

With the Council about to enter a consultation period for its new waste policy, now is the ideal time to look at better (and cheaper) ways to deal with waste in Perth and Kinross. One or two people have expressed an interest in meeting relevant Councillors and Council officers about this. Please let me know if you would be interested, and when you would be available (e.g. which days, and what sort of time).

You are cordially invited to apply for membership of the private discussion board of the Tayside Environmental Action Group at <http://www.teag.org.uk> - look for the link on the left hand side - you'll need a google account to use it.

With very best wishes,

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