



The controversial Courtice incinerator is a step closer to reality, as a groundbreaking ceremony kicked off construction of the facility.

The Regional Municipalities of Durham and York held an official groundbreaking ceremony on Wednesday for the new Durham York Energy Centre (DYEC), an energy-from-waste (EFW) facility in Clarington that was made possible due to funding from the federal Gas Tax Fund.

The incinerator was at the centre of a heated public debate, as opponents claim it will cause air quality issues for the area. Despite the widespread opposition, the province recently gave the green light for the project to go ahead.

The DYEC will process the residential waste that remains after Durham and York Regions' composting and recycling programs, while also recovering materials and energy. Through thermal mass burn technology, the municipal solid waste is fed into a furnace where it is burned at temperatures above 1,000 degrees Celsius. The remaining ash is then shipped to landfill or reused in product manufacturing.

"The Regional Municipality of Durham has been working towards a long-term waste

management solution since 1999, and we've found an answer in the Durham York Energy Centre," says Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer Roger Anderson. "This facility will continue to support our waste policy by encouraging the public to further reduce, reuse and recycle their waste, in an effort to ensure that what is left can still be recovered. Now that construction is about to commence, I expect the facility to be fully operational by the end of 2014."

The EFW process also includes production of high-pressure steam, which is fed through a turbine generator that produces electricity. When operating at design capacity, the electricity sold to the provincial grid is sufficient to power about 10,000 homes, while the future district heating system will produce heat equivalent to the needs of 2,200 homes.

The Durham York Energy Centre will have a maximum capacity of 140,000 tonnes per year. The Region of Durham is entitled to process up to 110,000 tonnes each year, while York Region is entitled to process up to 30,000 tonnes annually.

Funding for this project was made possible by the federal Gas Tax Fund. This program provides municipalities with a source of stable and predictable funding for environmentally sustainable infrastructure, while also helping to stimulate economic development, create new jobs, and improve infrastructure to support economic growth and long-term prosperity. Municipalities may use this funding for infrastructure projects that contribute to cleaner water, air and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. This project falls under the Solid waste - thermal treatment and landfill gas recuperation category.

"The federal Gas Tax Fund acknowledges that all orders of government must work together to address the pressing need for infrastructure investment in Ontario," said Peter Hume, President of the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO). "The funding is supporting thousands of important infrastructure projects and is critical to job creation, Ontario's competitiveness and environmental sustainability."

Through AMO, Ontario municipalities negotiated a unique agreement with the federal government that ensures the province's municipalities receive stable and predictable Gas Tax revenue on an annual basis, according to a per capita formula. The transfer of flexible and reliable Gas Tax funds allows municipalities to plan for the future and to meet the specific needs of their communities by investing in local priority projects. Between 2010 and 2014, the federal Gas Tax Fund will contribute \$746 million of funding annually for environmentally

sustainable municipal infrastructure projects in Ontario.

Graphic is of a waste burning incinerator facility in Italy

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