

Peel approves plan for energy recovery centre

Peel Regional council has approved a plan to design, build, operate and maintain the Peel Energy Recovery Centre.

“The development of the Peel Energy Recovery Centre is a key component of the Region's Long Term Waste Management Strategy, which aims to recover and effectively use resources from our waste stream so we can conserve natural resources,” remarked Brampton Councillor Sanderson, chair of the Waste Management Committee. “The Peel Energy Recovery Centre is a responsible choice for managing Peel's residual waste.”

“In a survey conducted last fall (2012), residents told us they wanted the Region to work toward reducing waste generation and increasing resource recovery in a way that protects the environment,” explained the Region's Director of Waste Management Norm Lee. “The new energy recovery centre will enable us to safely and reliably recover valuable resources, such as energy and recyclable metals, which would otherwise be lost in a landfill.”

The same survey showed that the majority of Peel residents supported the development of an energy-from-waste facility within the region, over hauling Peel's waste to an out-of-Region landfill, he added.

Using an established energy-from-waste technology, the Peel Energy Recovery Centre will process 300,000 tonnes per year of Peel's residential garbage to produce useable energy, such as steam or electricity and recover recyclable metals. It will allow the Region to reduce the overall volume of waste going to landfill by up to 90 per cent, decreasing its reliance on landfill disposal and its impact on the environment.

“Over its lifetime, the new Centre will reduce greenhouse emissions to as little as half the greenhouse gases that are currently released by hauling our garbage to an out-of-Region landfill,” remarked Lee.

The location of the facility has not yet been determined.

To ensure that the Centre's workers, surrounding area residents and the environment as a whole are protected, the Centre will use advanced technologies to control and monitor emissions. The Region will also undertake a provincially regulated Environmental Screening Process to identify the potential environmental effects of this project and determine how best to address them, which will include conducting detailed studies on air quality, health, ground and surface water, traffic, noise, etc.

In 2012, the Region disposed of more than 250,000 tonnes of residential garbage, which remained after residents reduced, reused, recycled and composted their household waste. Even with planned diversion programs, such as bi-weekly garbage collection, enhanced recycling programs and the implementation of Extended Producer Responsibility initiatives, current waste and household growth projections show that when the new Centre opens in 2020, the Region will need to dispose of more than 270,000 tonnes of garbage per year; with as much as 400,000 tonnes per year over the facility's 30-40 year lifespan.

In 2010, council directed the Region to conduct a Long-term Waste Disposal Study (completed in 2011) to identify the preferred long-term waste disposal method for Peel. Taking into account Peel's specific social, environmental and economic considerations, the Study identified the use of an established energy-from-waste technology along with landfill disposal as the preferred option for Peel.