

Presentation on air quality was lacking

I read your article on the presentation made by an engineering firm hired by Canadian Tire to do its report on the proposed Canadian Tire Depot in south Bolton (Caledon Citizen, May 16).

The air quality report was presented to Caledon council. Here are some comments for the consideration of your readers and for the members of council.

There is nothing in the presentation which is different from what some members of council have been suggesting or trying to suggest as accurate over the last several months.

In using as a partial basis for some of the conclusions in the presentation, the firm apparently used 350 trucks per day. How can the public buy that number when in August 2012, another consultant for Canadian Tire in writing indicated that on average, the proposed depot daily would see 750 to 800 trucks per day? What has changed in the meantime, because the application still states a proposed depot of 1,500,000 square feet? Some of us would conclude then that the presentation lacked credibility due to the altered numbers.

The article suggested that Canadian Tire Corporation's (CTC) fleet of trucks are pristine with respect to meeting standards for emission controls. Well, sources that we have suggest that the majority of trucks presently being used by CTC are independent or contracted carriers, not corporation trucks.

A few years ago, in 2009, concerned Bolton residents asked for air quality tests to be done in Bolton, especially at the intersections of Highway 50 and King Street, as well as Mayfield Road. We were and are concerned about the emissions from trucks and other vehicles. Instead, air quality testing was done elsewhere. So how accurate are the assumed tests/models the report refers to? When were they taken? Under what conditions and by whom?

By the way, I wouldn't have much confidence in the "stringent requirements for benzeno(a)pyrene" in Ontario. Why? The Ministry of the Environment for several years has suffered enormous cutbacks plus layoffs and, therefore, there is a huge problem in Ontario with enforcement of many provincial regulations and standards. It is wonderful to have such standards, but they have to be enforced by government-related agencies. Perhaps your readers remember the tragedy last year in Elliot Lake? Or maybe some of your readers are aware of the ongoing problems Palgrave residents and others are having over the Tottenham pit? As for federal standards, well maybe some of your readers are aware of the cutbacks there as well? What about the near-misses at Pearson recently reported in the Toronto print media?

Mike Lepage, project director and principal with RWDI Consulting Engineers and Scientists, said that some of the presentation's data with respect to winds were based on data from Pearson International Airport. Great! We live in Bolton and the prevailing wind patterns affecting Bolton usually are from the west and north, which means that the emissions discussed in the report will affect all of Bolton and in fact, north Brampton.

So, to conclude, in my opinion, the report from the World Health Organization (WHO) has much greater credibility than the presentation by a business consultant given to council last Tuesday. A WHO press release clearly and definitely stated that diesel emissions cause cancer (June 12, 2012). A copy of that press release and its scientific basis is being provided to both the Caledon Citizen and Caledon Enterprise.

And dear editor, your headline on page 1 of the Citizen in my view was misleading, in that it stated, "Vehicle emissions from Canadian Tire facility won't be bad." I would suggest that the headline's wording was misleading, since it stated something as fact when it has not been proven as fact. Would other wording be appropriate, such as, "Consultant's report argues emission from proposed facility not bad?"

Joe Grogan,
Bolton