

Waste Not

The Weekly Reporter
for rational
resource management

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AUSTIN, TEXAS, CITY COUNCIL VOTES 5-2 AGAINST 600 TPD BABCOCK & WILCOX MASS-BURN INCINERATOR.

INCINERATOR. On July 14, 1988, Austin City Council voted against the incinerator project because of the economics of incineration. In September 1984 the residents of Austin voted to authorize \$80 million in bonds for the incinerator. Bonds were issued. The proposed costs for the 600 tpd Babcock & Wilcox incinerator was \$80 million, excluding disposal costs for the ash. The City of Austin bought 1,000 acres in the unincorporated town of Del Valle for the incinerator ash disposal. It is believed that Austin will lose as much as \$20 million by stopping this project, although staff estimates run to \$24 million. A task force is being set up to salvage as much money as they can from the failed project. There are 7 members on the City Council, a Mayor and six council members. A new Mayor was elected in April who supported the incinerator. A councilman was elected in April who ran against the incinerator. The Mayor voted against the incinerator in the July 14th vote. The principal proponent of the incinerator was Peck Young, who owns a political consulting firm in Austin. Young was a member of the Electric Utility Commission, and in 1984 voters were pro-incinerator because they believed Austin needed the energy, which turned out not to be true. Peck Young represented the unions who wanted to build the incinerator. The incinerator was Young's "baby", and he fought tooth and nail for it. Young is considered a 'king pin' of liberal politics in Austin. According to sources in Austin, Young has suffered a political defeat they view as unrecoverable. Neil Seldman, of the **Institute of Local Self-Reliance**, was brought in as an expert witness against the Austin incinerator. Neil's testimony was viewed as crucial and instrumental. In the last six to eight weeks many groups came out in opposition to the incinerator such as the Austin Board of Realtors and Interfaith, a coalition of Austin's churches. Austin is now looking at solutions to its waste through source separation and recycling. There are three individuals who deserve special recognition for fighting this incinerator for the past four years. They are: Janette Grainger, Jackie Jacobson, and Connie Moore. For more information contact Connie at 200 West Mary, Austin, TX 78704, tel: 512-443-0941.

CONGRESSMAN JAMES FLORIO (NJ) INTRODUCES LEGISLATION TO MANAGE INCINERATOR ASH AS A SPECIAL WASTE.

FLORIO'S BILL. Florio's bill has ignited concerns among those concerned with environmental protection versus those against environmental victimization. The **Environmental Defense Fund** is supporting Florio's bill. According to Dr. Richard Denison, Florio's bill would eliminate the worst abuses of current ash management. This legislation would treat ash more stringently than current hazardous waste handling. The bill asks that the ash be monofilled with four liners, toxicity tests, and a determination for all routes of exposure from incinerator ash. Dr. Denison said the bill is "not to smooth the way for more incinerators to be built", that there is no "grandfathering", and that municipalities can "face the music" by factoring upfront the economics of ash management. Dr. Peter Montague of **Hazardous Waste News** says Florio's bill is not an adequate solution. "The only adequate solution we know of is: don't make the ash, don't incinerate garbage...The ash from municipal incinerators is heavily laced with toxic metals (lead, cadmium, arsenic, etc.) and is therefore dangerous. Incinerator ash is actually more dangerous than the raw garbage from which it is derived...Today's ash landfills are tomorrow's superfund sites..." **Hazardous Waste News #85**. According to Will Collette of the **Citizen's Clearing House for Hazardous Waste** the question arises: "Who gave the 'enviros' the mandate to compromise away our environment?" Will questions why any group concerned with the environment would endorse a bill knowing full well that incinerator ash landfills will create more victims of hazardous waste. Dr. Hank Cole of **Clean Water Action Project** (Washington, D.C.) says: "The net effect of Florio's bill might be to increase incineration of waste rather than to reduce it." Florio's bill will allow the 'regulatory certainty' that industry is anxious to have by "greasing the

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skids for this technology." CLEAN WATER ACTION PROJECT is concerned that there will be a number of states where it might be easier to site a 'special waste' landfill than a hazardous waste site, and that all the levels of protection under RCRA SUBTITLE C: HAZARDOUS WASTE, are not built into Florio's bill. All the community groups Clean Water has been talking to do not like Florio's bill. They want legislation to mandate the alternatives first. They don't want ash disposal pits all over the country. Florio's bill calls for a comprehensive management for waste disposal, but 'enforcement' for such a plan is not written into it. According to **Waste Not**, for a waste to be labeled 'hazardous' it theoretically needs to be traceable 'cradle to grave'. Florio's bill would exempt incinerator ash from this regulation. Without the label 'hazardous' attached, incinerator ash would be allowed to be dumped overseas without trace, and with trickery played upon third-world countries. Sending incinerator ash abroad (which is happening right now) with the U.S. 'non-hazardous' label would be sufficient proof to some countries to accept this waste without its true nature being rightly defined. In the U.S., Florio's bill will be proof-positive to many appointed and elected officials that incinerator ash is not a hazardous waste. No matter where the ash is dumped, either in the U.S. or overseas, incinerator ashfills will, indeed, create more victims of hazardous waste. The absence of the 'hazardous' label on ash in Florio's bill will allow the incinerator industry the escape it is desperately seeking to push incinerators.

"18 BILLION DIAPERS WERE THROWN AWAY LAST YEAR REPRESENTING NEARLY 4% OF ALL WASTE

deposited in the country's 'already overburdened landfills,' according to Congressman Ron Wyden of Oregon. "This year there is a quota of 1,270,000 pounds of cotton diapers from China, and Mr. Wyden warns that unless that is enlarged the prospects for growth in the domestic diaper service industry will be 'dampened'...The U.S. and China signed a textile agreement in December (1987) to limit the imports of cotton diapers. There is only one domestic producer of the diapers and 60 domestic production jobs. Mr. Wyden says, however, the diaper service industry has 40,000 employees, including drivers, office and sales personnel and people who launder and package diapers...Limiting the supply of reusable cotton diapers contributes to the use of disposal plastic diapers...In his own state there is a company that imports diapers for sale to services in 15 states and Canada. The firm says it could quickly double its business if it could obtain more diapers, but the new quota means it will only receive about half what is needed to meet current commitments." Mr. Wyden has called upon U.S. Trade representatives to go "back to the bargaining table and negotiate an expanded quota." Watertown Daily Times, (NY), 6-17-88, front page.

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDS: A GUIDE TO DETOXIFYING YOUR HOME, is a new publication from the League of Women Voters of Albany County. Available for \$2.60, postage & handling, address: 119 Washington Avenue, Albany, NY 12207. This 83 page booklet is an excellent guide that identifies toxics in the home, and the alternatives available.

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