

# Waste Not

The Weekly Reporter  
for rational  
resource management

#36

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January 3, 1989

**NEW YORK: ULSTER COUNTY SAYS NO TO INCINERATION. MALCOLM PIRNIE RECOMMENDS AGGRESSIVE RECYCLING AND LANDFILLING INSTEAD OF INCINERATION.** On December 15, 1988, the Ulster County Resource Recovery Agency (**RRA**) announced it will recommend landfilling and recycling, but not incineration, for a county solid waste management plan. "**Malcolm Pirnie** has a \$1.43 million contract (for 1988) with the Ulster County **RRA** to walk the county through the maze of requirements leading to the Generic Environmental Impact Statement..." (Poughkeepsie Journal, 12-16-88). Roger Bolton of **Malcolm Pirnie** "said the (**RRA**) turned away from incineration because it felt a landfill of about 100-150 acres on a 250-300 acre parcel would be less costly. Cost estimates for an incinerator are running at \$60 million to \$80 million. A landfill will probably cost 30-40% less than that, (County Legislature Chair) Matthews said. Bolton said an incinerator was not as feasible as a landfill, and it is not known, with recycling, how much garbage will go to a county plant..." (Times Herald Record, 12-16-88). "A representative of the (**Malcolm Pirnie**) consulting firm said that after 10 years, burning garbage for energy would be more expensive than landfilling," (Poughkeepsie Journal, 12-16-88). "**Malcolm Pirnie** said its decision was based only on technical, environmental and economic factors... (Stephen Schwarz, vice president of M.P.) pointed out that only 3% of **Malcolm Pirnie's** work involved incineration," (Poughkeepsie Journal, 12-31-88). The Ulster **RRA** was under fierce attack by county residents fearful that **Malcolm Pirnie** was leading the **RRA** into incineration. Before **Malcolm Pirnie's** Dec. 15 non-incineration recommendation for Ulster County, New York State Assemblyman **Maurice Hinchey** joined county residents in denouncing **Malcolm Pirnie** "as the 'consultant tail wagging the county dog,' (and) urged Ulster County officials to turn toward an aggressive recycling program. **Hinchey** accused the firm (**Malcolm Pirnie**) which was hired to aid in the development of a county solid waste management plan, of deliberately steering the agency toward incineration as a means of dealing with solid waste. **Hinchey** also said the town of Ulster recycling project, which was designed by (**Malcolm Pirnie**) was intentionally designed to fail, thereby promoting incineration. 'It's either designed deliberately to bring about poor participation, or it was developed by someone who needs remedial education,' **Hinchey** said...", Times Herald Record, 12-9-88. **Hinchey** chairs the N.Y. State Assembly's Environmental Conservation Committee and is the State Legislative Commissioner on Solid Waste Management. He authored the Solid Waste Disposal Law of 1988. While **Hinchey** has been strong on recycling in New York for the past two years he has played a key role in New York State in advocating incineration. Some contend that he came out against the incinerator in Ulster County because that is where he lives. **Hinchey** contends that "he still believes incineration is necessary on a statewide basis in highly populated areas, such as Long Island, but not in Ulster County where recycling and landfilling could do the work," Times Herald Record, 12-10-88. The population of Ulster County is approximately 160,000.

**OREGON: MARION COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ASK OGDEN MARTIN TO STOP IMPORTING MEDICAL WASTE TO BURN IN ITS 550 TPD MASS-BURN INCINERATOR.** "The public outcry against burning out-of-state medical waste prompted Marion County officials Wednesday to announce plans to stop the practice at the end of January. The commissioners took the action, they said, despite favorable test results and expert assurance of the safety of burning the waste. Waste from county hospitals and clinics will continue to be disposed of at the burner in Brooks... In September, the commissioners endorsed an arrangement with **Sure-Way Incineration Inc.**, a Seattle-based firm, to dispose of about 75 tons of medical waste collected each month from Seattle-area hospitals and clinics. In exchange for disposing of the waste, **Ogden Martin** would receive **Sure-Way's** assistance in refining a new program for disposing of similar waste generated in Marion County... The Commissioner's approval came about a month after the garbage burner began accepting the Seattle waste..." Statesman-Journal, 12-22-88.

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## **NEW YORK: DUTCHESS COUNTY. UNION REPRESENTING INCINERATOR WORKERS AT WESTINGHOUSE-**

**POUGHKEEPSIE INCINERATOR STAGE PROTEST.** The Poughkeepsie 400 tpd mass-burn incinerator was built by Pittsburgh-based **Pennsylvania Engineering Corp.** (See **Waste Not #11**). The start up was June 1, 1987. The incinerator was beset with chronic mechanical breakdowns at the same time that **Penn. Engineering** was facing financial problems due to corporate mismanagement. The plant was shut down in March 1988. The Dutchess County Resource Recovery Agency replaced **Penn. Engineering** with **Westinghouse** on a short-term contract to bring the incinerator back on line. The incinerator began burning on October 1, 1988. "A union seeking to represent workers at the county resource recovery plant Friday protested what it called unsafe conditions overlooked by plant operators. Members of Local 30 of the International Union of Operating Engineers demonstrated for an hour in a driving snowstorm, claiming that **Westinghouse Corp.** had both failed to correct unsafe conditions at the \$33 million incinerator. Union members also said the corporation discouraged workers from alerting appropriate federal authorities...The union local held the informational picket one week before a scheduled vote seeking to affiliate the 23 mechanics, welders, electricians, crane operators and other technical workers at the plant in the Town of Poughkeepsie, according to union business agent Jim Gannon. 'The men have come to us because their complaints have fallen on deaf ears,' Gannon said. Gannon said plant employees had complained about: \*The lack of proper tie-offs while working on ladders and scaffolds. \*The lack of insulation in extremely hot areas. \*Insufficient safety supervision for electricians. \*Water leaks occurring near welding sites. \*Excessive dust in the system that handles toxic ash. Plant manager Mike Lindsey said the **Westinghouse** safety director, Paul Palmieri, had given the plant a clean bill of health during a December inspection. '(Palmieri) said this is a safe plant to work in,' Lindsey said. 'That means the employees have to know how to work safely,'...", Poughkeepsie Journal, January 6, 1989.

**NEW JERSEY: NEWARK COUNCIL APPROVES BAN ON STYROFOAM PACKAGING.** Asserting that chlorofluorocarbons pose "an acute and immediate danger to human health, life and the environment" the Newark City Council approved an ordinance on November 2, 1988, that would ban the use of styrofoam or other CFC processed-food packing in the city by September 1989. The ordinance states: "The people and the City of Newark support international, federal and state bans on all uses of CFC not deemed absolutely essential. It is the intent of the Council to reduce the amount of CFC-processed products purchased and used by the City and people of Newark and thereby to reduce the health hazards created by the manufacture of these products." For a copy of the ordinance send a SASE to **Waste Not**.

**ARTICLE REPRINT AVAILABLE.** **Waste Not** has received several requests for the Journal of Hazardous Materials article cited in issue #33, "Lined Landfills: Small flaws can result in significant leaks." This article is now available from **Waste Not**. Please send a SASE.

### **Waste Not #36**

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**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

**Paul & Ellen Connett, Editors**  
82 Judson Street  
Canton, New York 13617  
(315)379-9200

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