

Toronto Environmental Alliance

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NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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TORONTO ENVIRONMENTAL ALLIANCE BLAMES PETERSON FOR FAILURE OF SWISC

The Toronto Environmental Alliance along with a number of community and environmental groups from throughout Ontario called on the Premier today to stop the Solid Waste Interim Steering Committee (SWISC) from building incinerators and landfill sites throughout Ontario. SWISC was formed by the Premier and the Chairs of the regions in the Greater Toronto Area in March 1989 to supposedly deal with the solid waste crisis. The groups demanded that the Premier force SWISC to adopt and implement an effective Reduction, Reuse and Recycling strategy for the Greater Toronto Area before proposals for any landfill sites are developed.

In a letter to Premier Peterson, the groups call SWISC the committee for placing **Solid Waste In Someone else's Community** and accuses the Premier of creating SWISC to dispose of GTA garbage throughout Ontario. Furthermore, the groups blame the Premier for not creating the legislative framework necessary to facilitate Reduction, Reuse and Recycling. This, they argue, allows SWISC to justify its plans for incineration and landfill, which are both environmentally and economically dangerous solid waste options. "Premier Peterson has made no effort to establish the 3Rs hierarchy in Ontario," says Gerard Coffey, a member of the Toronto Environmental Alliance. "This leads us to believe SWISC was created with the sole purpose of establishing landfill sites and incinerators throughout Ontario."

The letter also calls the willing host concept (ie. placing disposal sites only in those communities that want them) economic blackmail since the most likely candidates for GTA garbage are economically depressed communities. Coffey states "This concept is often justified as a job creation measure for economically depressed communities. We do not believe SWISC should be in the business of rural development. There are better ways of doing this."

The letter was accompanied by a report written for the Toronto Environmental Alliance entitled "Solid Waste in Someone else's Community: An Examination of the Solid Waste Interim Steering Committee". The report exposes SWISC's plans to immediately proceed with the development of incinerator and landfill sites throughout Ontario. It also reveals the dismal failure of SWISC's

3Rs Action Plan. Franz Hartmann, an author of the report stated "If SWISC is allowed to proceed with its agenda, no real 3Rs options will ever be implemented. This will mean privately-owned incinerators and landfill sites will become the main elements of the GTA solid waste management system."

The letter demands the Premier adopt the 9 recommendations made in the report in order to turn SWISC into an environmentally and socially responsible as well as accountable body. The recommendations include a call for a new 3Rs Action Program to be implemented before any landfill sites are to be developed and an immediate stop to proceeding with the development of incinerators. The recommendations also call on SWISC to adopt a publicly owned and operated waste management system directly accountable to the community.

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