

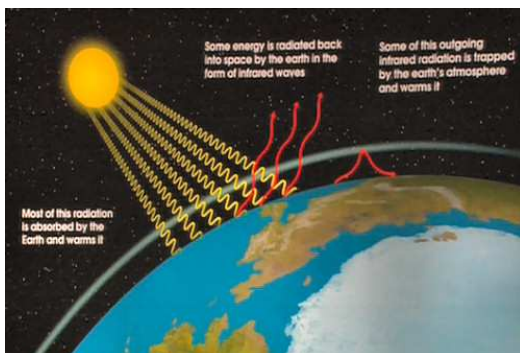
Investigative Reporting: The Newhaven Incinerator **by Jai Rajput-20th July 2009**

The Newhaven Incinerator is a machine that burns garbage supposedly to help the environment, but some people are against the idea of putting an incinerator in Newhaven, saying that it is ruining the environment. This report shows you the pros and cons of the Newhaven Incinerator...

The Newhaven Incinerator is said to be 100ft high and 500ft long. It is going to be located in North Quay, Newhaven. The cost to build the Newhaven Incinerator will be £145.7 million and Brighton & Hove City Council and East Sussex County Council have already invested £2 million in the idea. It is approximated that the Newhaven Incinerator will burn 22.83 waste products per hour, and 547.92 waste products per day.



There are protesters who are strongly against the idea of building an incinerator in Newhaven and reports show that several protesters created a barricade by super-gluing themselves to the road. This was an attempt to stop vehicles accessing the Newhaven Incinerator site.



Flying ash and bottom ash accounts for 1/3 of the waste produced (4,800 tonnes of gas is produced every year and 61,866 tonnes of bottom ash is produced every year as well), whereas gas, water vapour and ultra fine particles like mercury and cadmium account for 2/3 of the waste that is produced. This waste comes out as smoke and rises up into the atmosphere. Gasses like carbon-dioxide affect the ozone layer (O₃) because when sunlight passes through the ozone layer, some of it is

deflected back into space and some is absorbed. Carbon-dioxide doesn't let all of the sunlight reflect back into space; instead sunlight is reflected back to Earth, making it hotter. This is called the Greenhouse Effect (or Global Warming). The situation is already bad, so could the incinerator make it worse?

Bottom ash is contaminated with heavy metals like lead, cadmium, arsenic, chromium and others which can be harmful to people. Dr. Neil Cartman says that if the wind blows the smoke from the incinerator in the direction of schools, children would have to take a day off sick because of the smoke and gasses. Dr. Cartman has also seen children die from leukaemia, brain cancer and other disorders because of these gasses produced by the incinerators.

Incinerators emit the most toxic and bio-accumulative air pollutants which includes acidic gasses. Acidic gasses are one of four main areas of concern for an incinerator being built. This is because the gas contains compounds of hydrogen chloride, hydrogen fluoride, nitrogen oxides and sulphur dioxide. These gasses are responsible for, and create irritations to, the respiratory system and can pose a threat to asthma sufferers. There are three other main concerns for building an incinerator, they are: dioxins, heavy metals and fine dusts. These are produced from the incinerator.

Dioxins suppress the immune system, causing cancer, resulting in fewer male offspring and causing endocrine disruption, learning disabilities and behavioural problems. Dioxins can be passed on to babies in pregnancy or by breast feeding.

Heavy metals, such as cadmium, affects the lungs and kidneys, lead causes nerve and brain damage and mercury affects the central nervous system. Other metals to be concerned about are arsenic (As), antimony (Sb), aeryllium (Be), manganese (Mn), nickel (Ni), thallium (Tl) and vanadium (V).

Fine dust particles can penetrate into the lungs and causes asthma to worsen and other respiratory diseases to worsen too.

Nano particles are produced as a gas which can migrate around the body and pass through the lung lining causing internal inflammation and penetrate into organs; it can even penetrate to the foetus inside a pregnant mother.

I interviewed Shlomo Downen from the United Kingdom Without Incineration Network (UKWIN), who told me that incinerators take non-hazardous waste, but then turn it into a hazardous waste. This is then released into the air. The good thing is that there are filters to catch these hazardous waste products, but afterwards, what do we do with the filters? It is better to not burn the waste in the first place. The chemicals that are 'transformed' into hazardous waste products were not hazardous to start with; they are created because of the burning. If there are better ways of avoiding creating hazardous chemicals, why don't we use these ways?

He also explained that there are different alternatives instead of having to incinerate garbage. Local authorities everywhere should focus their minds on maximising recycling; this means they have to lay out more bins for recycling which is a much greener way to help the environment, and it is also a much cheaper way to get rid of waste rather than having to spend millions of pounds on an incinerator.

Another alternative is if containers are designed to be reused or recycled e.g. glass bottles are already recyclable, and materials that cannot be reused should not be used e.g. crisp packets. This should be replaced with materials that are easy to recycle or compost because it will decrease the risk of incineration and incinerators. Recyclable materials like plastic are still not recycled, which is why incinerators are being built. If adverts persuade people to recycle more and they do, incinerators will not be needed.

In Flanders, Belgium 75% of waste is recycled by a simple method - they divide their waste into 40 different categories, making it easier to identify the different waste products and making the material more useful.

Incinerators are mainly found in poor areas in Britain so if people want to move away from the incinerators, they might not be able to because they might not be able to afford to. Also, moving away from an incinerator can cause a risk because the next place you move to might be next to a factory.

People who live near the incinerators don't like it, mostly because it is noisy, the air around there is usually polluted and it is smelly. This is not exactly the environment anyone wants to live in which is the reason why people protest about incinerators, some people accept the fact that they can't do anything about it but a majority campaign vigorously.

I am against the idea of putting an incinerator in Newhaven because there is no need for it. We can advertise to recycle and get more people to recycle. I am concerned because the incinerator produces many harmful chemicals which can cause death or make people ill.

I believe, along with Shlomo Downen, that incinerators are unnecessary – we simply need to recycle more effectively to make a better world.