



Minnesota Nurses Association

November 8, 2010

Ms Tina Patton
Solid Waste Planning
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Road N
St. Paul, MN 55155-4100

Professional Distinction

Personal Dignity

Patient Advocacy

Dear Ms. Patton,

At the October 19, 2010 State Convention, the Minnesota Nurse Association (MNA) enthusiastically passed the attached resolution regarding the MPCA's proposed Metropolitan Solid Waste Management Policy Plan. This resolution calls on the MPCA and the State of Minnesota to put public health first in Minnesota waste management policies.

MNA represents 20,000 Registered Nurses from around the State of Minnesota and 12,000 Registered Nurses in the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. As Registered Nurses, we are committed to serve as patient advocates and as advocates for the health care needs of society at-large.

In reviewing the scientific evidence regarding the effects of garbage incineration on the environment and on the health of people, especially children, it seems clear that it is not in the interest of the public's health to promote garbage burning over any kind of managed landfilling of solid waste. This is especially true when there are examples of many other cities which show that over half of what is being burned today could be diverted to waste reduction strategies like recycling and composting.

Garbage incineration (or what the State of Minnesota calls "waste-to-energy" technology) doesn't make garbage disappear. It turns a solid waste problem into an air pollution problem, and creates a new waste disposal problem in the form of toxic ash and, often, contaminated water from cleaning the scrubbers that must also be landfilled and will be considered highly toxic for a very long time. With this in mind, it is clearly not in the interest of the public's health to put waste management policies into place that, in effect, make garbage burning a competitor with recycling and other waste reduction strategies like re-using and composting.

The scientific evidence demonstrates that this proposed policy is not a "solution" from a pollution control or a public health perspective. The Minnesota Nurse Association calls on the MPCA and the State of Minnesota to put the public health of our citizens first in the development of any waste management policies.

Thank you for your attention and consideration.
Sincerely,

Linda Hamilton RN, BSN

President, MNA

Cc:
Representative Frank Hornstein
Representative Karen Clark
Representative Paul Thissen

Enclosures: MNA Incineration Resolution

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