

From: Michael Luce
Sent: Sunday, March 27, 2022 8:04 PM
To: SPPC <sppc@london.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] CEAP submission ('Climate Emergency Action Plan')

If you really and truly want to make good on Workplan Action #7 'Demonstrating Leadership in Municipal Processes' in your CEAP then without further delay you need to recommend to Council (who have been laissez-fair on this matter) that the practice of allowing backyard or outdoor burning has to be stopped in London without further delay.

London has (give or take) 100,000 residential backyards.
If conservatively only 1 in 20 residential backyards burns wood fires, that's 5,000 fire pits, chimneas etc.
It is reasonable to assume that each of the 5,000 "pits" is used 4 times a year.
(note: if my memory serves me correctly, former Coun. Phil Squire (while advocating against a ban on backyard fires) told council back in 2016 that he was having about 10 such fires a year).
So a very reasonable estimate (using the 4 per year model) is that we have 20,000 fires per year in London.

Since the average fire consumes 10 lbs. of wood per hour and lasts on average 3 hours, then each fire consumes 30 lbs. of wood or 13.63 kg. of wood.

Each kilo. of burned wood on average produces 3.67 kg. of carbon.
So each of London's 20,000 fires produces 3.67 kg. of carbon times 13.63 kg. of wood equalling 50.02 kg. of carbon per backyard fire.

Our 20,000 fires collectively produce 20,000 times 50.02 kg. of carbon equalling 1,000,040 kg. of carbon annually.

That is 1,102.31 tons of carbon that London could reduce annually, just by banning outdoor (backyard) burning!

Now please don't say that eliminating 1102 tons of carbon annually is insignificant, or not worth doing.

Otherwise, your utter hypocrisy will be on full display.

After all, the City of London's 2021-2022 'Waste Reduction & Conservation Calendar' (while failing year after year to say a single word about woodsmoke pollution) does on page 24 under "City-led actions" tout reducing the city's footprint by "800 tonnes a year - the same as taking 200 cars off the road".

Furthermore, Mayor Holder appeared in and touted the same annual 800 tonne reduction of carbon in a 'YouTube' video entitled 'London's Organic Rankine Cycle System...'.
While I certainly applaud the 800 tonne reduction in annual carbon (and future cost savings) it did take a \$4.65 million federal grant to achieve.

Banning backyard burning should be at very worst revenue neutral since the LFD would reduce it's workload by about 5% (a tax saving?) since it would be no longer being required to answer complaints from people not being able to breathe because of a neighbour's woodsmoke.

Instead, as Waterloo did back in 2012 when they banned backyard burning, that task (reacting to complaints) was dramatically and immediately reduced ie. as soon as people understood they could no longer burn wood (or whatever) in their backyards, period.

Waterloo, subsequently facing very few related complaints after implementing such a ban were then easily able to handle the residual with a bylaw officer. If repeat offenders were found, a fine was issued.

Forget about the improved air quality and pollution reduction - which is an even greater issue that has been brushed aside by London council.

Simply look at it in the context of the climate emergency and the existential threat to the planet that we all find ourselves in.

And then ask yourself "why on earth would London choose not reduce our carbon footprint by 1,102 tons annually?"

Then the mayor could top himself by making a new 'YouTube' video touting the carbon reduction from simply banning all backyard burning. Heck, he could then proudly say "that is like taking 275 cars off the road".

If everyone can get over the politics and simply see the greater good, banning outdoor burning could be one of your low hanging fruit items. An easy box to check.

This ban on backyard burning doesn't have to involve rocket science or a dragged out process.

I'm sure Waterloo, Toronto, Guelph or Windsor would be happy to share their "no backyard burning" bylaw, if you need a model to move with speed.

People everywhere are waking up exponentially as to just how dangerous being involuntarily exposed to wood smoke pollution is.

Council will have to deal with this issue sooner or later - whether it is the carbon issue, or the environmental pollution or the health issues or all three. Why keep procrastinating, or pretending London doesn't have a problem that can easily be fixed?

thank you for reading and finally promptly acting,

Michael Luce
London