

HEALTH ALERT TO LORTON RESIDENTS: Covanta Trash Incinerator Fire

COME OUT...

Informational Meeting:

7pm, Monday, Feb 6th

Item Incorporated
991 Annapolis Way
Woodbridge, VA 22191

(At top of hill from Occoquan Harbour Marina)



ALERT:

**Please visit www.energyjustice.net/lortonfire
to urge our county supervisors to act!**



Covanta Fairfax is the third largest trash incinerator in the nation and is the biggest air polluter in our county. According to the latest EPA data, they're solely responsible for 75% of the industrial air pollution in Fairfax County, and they're the largest source of nitrogen oxide pollution within 20 miles of DC, contributing to asthma attacks. This is during normal operation. Clearly, the uncontrolled fire makes things much worse.

Trash incineration is the most polluting and expensive way to manage waste, or to make energy. It's dirtier than coal burning. Compared to a coal plant of the same size, it releases 28 times as much dioxin, twice as much carbon monoxide, 2.5 times as much carbon dioxide (CO₂), three times as much nitrogen oxides (NO_x), 6-14 times as much mercury, nearly six times as much lead and 70% more sulfur dioxides. This pollution contributes to many health problems, including asthma, cancers, learning disabilities, reproductive disorders and more.

GET INFORMED & INVOLVED!

For more info or to get involved, contact Mike Ewall at 215-436-9511 or mike@energyjustice.net

Learn more at www.energyjustice.net/va

DEMAND THIS OF OUR COUNTY SUPERVISORS:

Email them here:

www.energyjustice.net/lortonfire

1) Close the Covanta incinerator.

Whatever it takes, it's time for the county to get Covanta closed down. This aging facility is now 27 years old. Most trash incinerators don't last past a lifetime of 30 years. It's time to move on.

2) Proper notification of the community.

Covanta just had a fire at a smaller incinerator of theirs in Montgomery County, Maryland in December which burned for nearly two weeks. Their county health officials put out an alert to local residents, warning individuals with asthma or chronic lung or heart conditions that it's probably best to keep their distance from the area or remain indoors, and to contact their health care provider if they have problems. They notified residents within 1.5 miles. After that experience, they're changing their protocols to notify residents within three miles.

In Fairfax County, the county is failing to warn people, and is spreading word from the state that "there is no concern regarding air quality at the fire as it is ordinary household trash that is burning." This is absurd. If breathing smoke from burning trash were healthy, why are incinerators required to have expensive air pollution controls?

Around the Montgomery County incinerator, they have about 600 residents within three miles. We have 37,000. This fire is much worse than the one in Montgomery County. We need an honest and working system for community notification of health hazards.

3) Health monitoring.

Nineteen firefighters who battled Covanta's fire in Montgomery County filed for workman's compensation afterward. Over 70 firefighters have been involved in battling the blaze in Lorton. All of the firefighters and emergency responders ought to be provided immediate and ongoing testing for toxic exposures.



The "I-95 Energy/Resource Recovery Facility," owned and operated by Covanta, burns up to 3,000 tons of trash a day from VA, DC, MD and six other states.

In addition, all residents within three miles of Covanta Fairfax ought to be offered free hair tests for toxic metals. This should be done immediately, to get a baseline, and again in the coming months, to find signs of toxic exposure. The County ought to demand that Covanta reimburse the County for this.

4) Independent air monitoring.

Covanta is doing its own monitoring of the outside air. In Montgomery County, the county set up their own air monitors to test for particulate matter and air toxics. Fairfax County deserves no less. At a minimum, testing should include fine particulate matter (PM2.5), dioxins, and toxic metals such as mercury, lead, and arsenic.

5) Real alternatives.

Arlington, Washington, DC, Prince George's County, and Maryland in general are moving toward developing "zero waste" plans. Zero Waste eliminates incineration and aims to landfill as little as possible through aggressive source reduction, reuse, recycling, composting, and more. For every 100 tons of waste burned in an incinerator, 30 tons of toxic ash remain to be landfilled, which gets dumped in our I-95 Landfill behind Covanta. Done right, a Zero Waste program can reduce waste to landfills by more than this 70% reduction, turning the other 70 tons into recycling and composting jobs, not air pollution.