

To Warden Kevin Eccles and Grey County Councillors

On April 21, I gave a deputation to the planning committee asking them to ban fracking in Grey County. I believe that fracking should be banned everywhere but let's start here. The planning department came back on June 16 with a report that gave 3 options and you have option 3 in front of you today. This resolution is a good step and I thank the committee and the planning department for their work and consideration on this issue.

In my opinion the province is taking a wait and see approach when they need to be proactive and , at the very least put strict regulations in place. If companies are allowed to start fracking anywhere in Ontario ,it will be unstoppable because of the North American Free Trade Agreement. It is important to stop it before it starts.

I would like to emphasize that I don't believe fracking can be done safely. This has been proven over and over again with contaminated water wells, earthquakes and even explosions. The industry will say that they drill below the impermeable rock layer and then drill horizontally and that makes it safe. The fracking companies have been known to drill at much shallower depths. They fracture the shale to release the oil or gas. I would like to use the analogy of a sponge soaked with water and you then squeeze it to get rid of the water. Is it dry after you stop squeezing? Toxic chemicals are put into these underground fissures that have been created and it is impossible to get it all back out. Most of the water can be taken out of the sponge but I think that it will be much more difficult to retrieve the chemicals from rock. Those chemicals are then free to leach into water aquifers.

I realize that Grey County doesn't have the authority to grant or deny fracking permits but I think that it is important to say that Grey County bans fracking and supports a Provincial ban. If more Counties do the same then the Province has to listen. Fracking bans are not unprecedented. France, New York State and Vermont have bans, Quebec and New Brunswick have moratoria and there are many more places that have either an outright ban or a moratorium.

In closing I would like to point out "Action item 3.5 of the Corporate Strategic Plan indicates that the County should protect and conserve natural resources in the County." (1) Water is a very valuable natural resource and we are blessed with good water here so let's protect it!! Thank you.

(1) Grey County Committee Report PDR-PCD-27-15

Sincerely


David Walton