

A Few Questions about the Citizens' Recommendations - LTE *Sierra Vista Herald* (February 25, 2005)

Is anyone at all surprised that the committee chaired by the man who originally plumped for the Whetstone incinerator proposal should now recommend the county move the proposal forward?

Why is it the recommendations of Lee Basnar's self-appointed Landfill Alternatives Committee seems to have so much influence on the process? Why, for instance, do those recommendations seem to have so much more weight with the county than the earlier recommendations of many citizens that this oft-failed technology be seen for the scam that it has proved to be elsewhere and dropped? Why should Cochise County be expected to play guinea pig to another financial technological fantasy?

And why did Mr. Basnar's so-called Landfill Alternatives Committee look only at this scheme and brush off all of the really viable alternatives to landfill, such as a real recycling program and a real toxics use reduction program?

Looking for a technological fix for problems like waste disposal is shortsighted at best. The problem is not so much technological as cultural. It can be solved only at the front end of the cycle, where waste generation takes place, not at the end of the pipe.

Lee Basnar is a thoughtful, concerned citizen whose advice on environmental issues we have often welcomed in the past. We would likewise welcome the concentrated effort of Mr. Basnar's committee in finding real solutions. We cannot be grateful, however, for their playback of his original newspaper articles touting our further involvement with this modern-day alchemy and the out-of-nowhere company proposing it.