



Advocating for the responsible use of water,  
air and land in the Guelph-Eramosa  
Township and surrounding areas.

# Introduction - Our Campaign

Issue 1  
May 15, 2018

## IN THIS ISSUE

## Our Mission and Campaign

We are thrilled that you are reading the first edition of our newsletter. In this Issue we introduce you to our inaugural campaign and share the information that we are working on diligently to dig up and find out.

GETconcerned.org formed quickly and spontaneously following the news that Xinyi Glass Holdings plans to build a float glass plant in Guelph-Eramosa Township.

**Given the magnitude and importance of the news, there is reason for concern.**

Though supportive of responsible industrial development in our township, residents were alarmed

as the facts of the proposal were unveiled.

The plan includes a 2 million sq. ft. mega-plant including a 300 ft high emissions stack. (see other startling facts, p. 3-4).

**The most shocking feature however, is the extraordinary requirement for water—1.6 Million litres DAILY.**

**Our goal is to stop this proposal.**

Please read on to learn more. Feel free to GET concerned and contact us to help us tell our governments to stop using economic development or trade agreements to allow our precious natural resources to be appropriated, exported or misused.



**The Precious Waters of Guelph-Eramosa Township**  
*Identified as one of the best aquifers in the world. Find out why.*

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**The Xinyi Glass Plant Proposal - What's the Concern?**  
*Read about exactly what the proposal includes and why GETconcerned.org is not willing to host this plant.*

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# News and Events

Thank you to everyone who attended the Guelph-Eramosa Township Council meeting on May 9, 2018. It is vital that we had our voice heard .

Over 130 concerned citizens showed up to demonstrate their disapproval for this project and to seek answers.

**Indeed, this was not a normal GET Council meeting.**

The room was full to capacity, including the Proponent for the proposal, many representatives from outside reporting agencies, and numerous media outlets.

Several members of GETconcerned.org and our

supporters posed questions surrounding all aspects of the plant. This included issues about:

- water usage
- private well interference
- air quality
- traffic congestion
- soil and ground water contamination
- fire & disaster response.

Many of the necessary reports were missing, (most notably, Hydrology), and others were incomplete, or lacking critical information. It became evident that Mayor White and his council were not able to make an informed decision about the by-law amendments being requested.



*GETconcerned.org member calls the Xinyi Glass proposal an "assault on the environment"*

The meeting concluded with a promise from Mayor White that a second Public Meeting would be held once the reports were complete and more information was available.



***"The wars of the twenty-first century will be fought over water"***

*Ismail Serageldin*

## The Precious Waters of Guelph-Eramosa Township

Our drinking water supply in Guelph comes from a local aquifer that provides water to hundreds of thousands of people in Ontario. Guelph and GET are one of the few communities left in Canada that can enjoy the purity of groundwater for their drinking supply. This aquifer is widely recognized for supplying unsurpassed, high quality water with low salinity.

**Of course, the quality of this water has not escaped the attention of corporations who want to use our drinking water for profit.**

While many people may think groundwater is replenished by rain and melting snow (like lakes and rivers are), underground water is actually renewed much more slowly.

**In fact, Less than 6% of groundwater is replenished within 50 years, effectively making it a non-renewable resource.**

***Precious, unique and at risk. It is crucial to protect these waters!***

## FAST FACTS

**2,000,000 sq. ft**

size of proposed plant

**300 ft.**

Height of emissions stack

**7 Stories**

Height of exterior walls

**1,600,000 litres**

Minimum *daily* draw of water

**66%**

Amount of *water evaporated* during the manufacturing process

**365 / 24 / 7**

Days/year, Hours/day and Days/week this plant will operate

**80-100 Trucks**

Additional daily traffic *per day* to ship finished product

**10 Years**

How long Xinyi will *receive tax breaks* from the Ontario government



*Xinyi Glass Deyang float glass factory, approximating the size and format of the proposed Guelph Eramosa plant.*

## The Xinyi Glass Proposal - What's the Concern?

Everyone in Guelph-Eramosa Township (GET) and the Guelph area should be concerned about this float glass plant. This massive industrial plant presents hazards to the entire area.

### Details about proposed Xinyi glass-float plant

- Xinyi has purchased about 125 acres just outside Guelph, and plans to build a 2 million sq ft mega-plant (2/3 the size of the entire Toyota plant in Cambridge).
- It will be 72.2 ft (7 stories) in height, while most industrial buildings in the area are 18-24 ft.
- Xinyi is asking GET to change the Zoning By-laws in order to squeeze this plant onto the site which is both too small and NOT zoned for such a use.

### The Top 5

**Water: 1.6 million litres a day *IS* significant.**

This plant is using the pristine waters of the unique and fragile aquifer for industrial purposes. To add insult to injury, 66% of this will evaporate in the manufacturing process.

The Rural Industrial (M1) only supports Dry Industrial Use for the property Xinyi intends to purchase.

Prolonged droughts and more 'violent' (less useful) rain are symptoms of climate change. What happens to our water supply when this happens?

### Air Quality

The plant will emit sulphur oxides, nitrogen oxides and various aerosols



through a 300 foot smokestack. Smog and acid rain are real issues. Greenhouse gases are also produced.

**Traffic: 150 Trucks /day, 3 Trains per week**

Located at the intersection of Highway 124 and County Rd 32, this plant will increase the already heavy traffic when Xinyi's 100-150 trucks travel on this road system every day of the week. In addition, 3 trains including 40 cars each will be delivering raw materials.

**Fire and Safety**

Located close to 2 propane distribution businesses and a chemical plant. Furnaces used for glass production will operate 365 days/year, 24 hours per day at approximately 1500°C.

**Policy and Precedent**

GET officials appear to be fast-tracking this massive proposal without adequate public consultation or fact-based



information arising from environmental assessments and other legally required technical studies.

*Above: Xinyi Glass site plan for the Guelph Eramosa plant*

## On Being Responsible

The Public only learned about this development proposal on March 23, even though official planning has been "under the radar" for months. It is a result of Premier Kathleen Wynne's Fall 2017 Trade Mission to China.

**The magnitude of this project cannot be overstated.**

Given what we have learned so far despite the difficult access to information, we question the social, political and economic responsibility of a development project of this magnitude.

We question the potentially damaging impact being introduced to a Township that does not have the infrastructure or sufficient knowledge to facilitate the Xinyi plant proposal.

It is critical to slow down this proposal and get all of the information we need before moving forward on it.



*Mayor Chris White fields questions at the May 9 meeting*

**You have a right to know  
This is too big an issue to  
be rushed**

**The entire community  
needs to be consulted**



# The Issue of Water

## Water usage

The plant will pump 1.6 MILLION litres of water out of our aquifers DAILY, year after year. This rural area is zoned for "dry industrial" use – "dry" means industrial developments that "do not use significant amounts of water in their operation." This mega-plant will use an estimated 70 per cent of the entire township's present yearly water consumption. Water is not an infinitely renewable resource: just look to our close neighbour Erin who will spend another \$600,000 hoping to find another viable water source for their town. Guelph already rations water in summertime. The Queensdale wellhead (on the Xinyi side of Guelph) is already deemed "unsustainable." Nestle already takes water from our aquifers. Trained Hydrogeologists say aquifers are connected. No one knows if prolonged droughts or Climate Change will damage or deplete Guelph's aquifers, some of which are already under threat.

## Water purity

All the Guelph aquifers are refilled by ground water (rain, snow, run-offs). Quantity of water is one

concern, but Quality is a bigger one. (Remember "Walkerton"?) A massive plant like Xinyi will produce chemical and other effluents, and some will drain into ground water.

Incredibly, the Xinyi plant will sit on the boundary but just outside the Province's "Source Water Protection" area which may exempt Xinyi from a "Tier 3 Assessment" through the "Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change" (MOECC). This may mean lesser scrutiny of Xinyi's effect on the entire Environment. MOECC is responsible for granting "Permits to Take Water" (PTTW). They should do the full Tier # 3 Assessment.

## Private Wells

Even worse, private wells do NOT have protection under the Clean Water Act (CWA). Most residents of GET have their own private wells. Pollution of these wells would not be covered by Provincial Legislation, according to the "Canadian Environmental Law Association" (CELA). Residents are afraid their wells will be affected – or go dry.



## Donate

Help us help the Township and the Guelph community. Your funds will be put toward legal costs and the marketing cost of our campaign.



## Participate

There is power in numbers. It is the only way we will get the attention of the multiple levels of government and agencies. Have your voice heard.



## Amalgamate

**JOIN US!** We are always looking for people who are passionate about the environment – the water we drink, the air we breathe and the land we live on.