



GETconcerned.org

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

Too Big  
Too Dangerous  
Too Thirsty

Issue 3

June 15, 2018

IN THIS ISSUE

## Wrong for Many Reasons

Welcome Summer! We are grateful that the GETconcerned newsletter is on your summer reading list.

We know that the Xinyi Glass plant proposal is not a good fit for Guelph Eramosa Township...we lack the *experience* to assess it – we lack the *information* to assess it – and we lack *political leaders* who will challenge it.

It is a big, dangerous and THIRSTY project, and it does not belong in GET.

Responsible water usage is the key critical issue for GETconcerned, but there are many other matters that make the Xinyi proposal the wrong industry for Guelph-Eramosa Township.

Here we focus on Fire & Safety.

**Please attend the Community Meeting.**

There, and in future newsletters, we will cover additional concerns about the proposed development:

- On-site dormitories: safety issues and not a Canadian cultural norm. What precedent would this set?
- Traffic congestion: +100 trucks and +300 cars per day
- Jobs and Economic Viability: an industry known for low employment rates. What is really in this for GET and even Ontario?

**We look forward to meeting you on June 18.**

Fire & Safety

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Insert:

**Guelph Aquifers are Under Siege  
Water Day is Every Day**

### YOU ARE INVITED

#### GETconcerned Community Meeting

*June 18, 2018*

*7 p.m. – 9 p.m.*

*Parkwood Gardens  
Community Church*

*501 Whitelaw Rd, Guelph*

*Come to be informed about  
the development, where we  
stand and where we go from  
here.*

# Fire & Safety

Furnaces used in float glass operations run **non-stop** at approximately 1600C, , 24/7, 365 days per year for their 12-15 year lifetime.

The Xinyi plant with such a fiery behemoth will be located at the convergence of two bulk fuel storage facilities (Superior Propane, UPI), two chemical plants (Sodrox, FloChem) and a Gas Station (Petro-Can). UPI and Sodrox would actually border the Xinyi site.

***It is disturbing to envision the scenario of an extreme incident involving this plant.***

Fire accidents in float glass plants are certainly not unheard of. They can be caused by a natural gas leak explosion or molten glass seepage. Globally, float glass is in short supply partly because two manufacturing plants in the USA had fire accidents last year.

The Xinyi Glass proposal includes on-site housing that is intended in part, for "staff who function as a first responding team that can respond quickly to an emergency (e.g. a fire)".

These firefighters will be part of the specialized Chinese worker contingent who live onsite 24/7.

The proposal also includes the presence of two ponds on the property, one for firefighting purposes. *Xinyi has not specified how much water they plan to have on site for emergency purposes. It is an unknown.*

In a molten glass leak accident in Pennsylvania last year, fire companies from 6 counties were called to the scene, including a hazardous materials team. If there is an explosion or tragic fire event at the Xinyi plant, reinforcements from neighbouring municipalities, (Puslinch, Rockwood, Erin, and Centre Wellington) would need to be called in.

**GETconcerned asked GET Mayor and Council many questions at the May 9th Public meeting and in subsequent emails. (sidebar)**

The answers to some of these questions brought *no* measure of comfort to anyone at that meeting and only served to question the preparedness of GET to react to a Fire or emergency event at the Xinyi plant.

We have been told that "it is early to be answering these questions", and that they will be considered when the site plan application process begins.

***Given the extraordinarily poor proposed location, we question the sensibility of the Mayor and council to pass this proposal to any further stage.***

## GETconcerned Asked

- Do all responders EMS, Fire and Police have the training and equipment to respond to an event of this magnitude?
- Has GET ever had to coordinate a disaster response with multiple neighbouring municipalities before?
- How long would it take all necessary responders to get to the scene?
- How would people in the immediate area escape and where would they go to seek shelter?
- Has anyone devised a mass Emergency evacuation plan?
- **What would be the Environmental effects of such a catastrophic event?**
- **Who would cover the costs for the resulting disaster, the GET taxpayers?**

**The City of Guelph Fire Department says it would not be equipped to deal with a massive explosion and fire.**



Above: Fire at the Vitro Glass Plant in Pennsylvania (Aug 2017) and Right, Guardian Glass Plant in DeWitt, Iowa (June 2017)

In a review of the submitted Planning Report, ministry of municipal affairs state:

*"we would like to raise a specific issue related to land use compatibility ... We suggest that the planning report would be strengthened by including further analysis related to the compatibility of the residential uses proposed on the subject lands in relation to the existing industrial uses on adjacent properties, including the two propane operations identified in Fig 2 of the planning report"*



the probability of fire-related disasters – disasters that GET is simply not able to respond to.

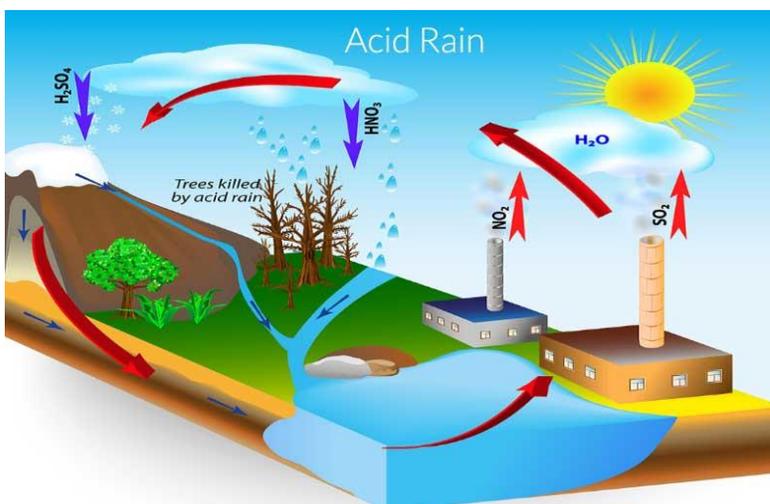
If the Councilors approve this By-Law change, they are endorsing this project and endangering both GET citizens and the City of Guelph.

Planning Report reviews are already raising concerns about

## Air Emissions, Dust, and Noise

The major environmental impact of glass production is caused by atmospheric emissions from melting activities. Dust, noise and water pollution are also major concerns for producers.

All glass producers battle with the problem of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (greenhouse gas) and Sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxides - the ingredients of acid rain.



- Silica sand, limestone and soda ash used for glass-making are all dusty materials and are delivered either as a powder or as a fine-grained material. Given the large amounts of material moved each day, only a small amount has to escape for there to be a dust problem.
- Evaporation from the molten glass and raw materials can cause release of particles into the atmosphere. Heavy metals can be present in the particulate matter.
- The impact of noise generated is particularly significant in the glass industry during melting, moulding and cooling.
- Noise and emissions that cannot be controlled are that created by the additional truck, train and traffic movements. Xinyi plans to use 80-100 trucks per day for finished product, plus 3 trains per week for raw materials.

# Aquifers in Guelph/Eramosa are Under Siege

Companies like Xinyi are literally mining Guelph Eramosa water as if they were mining oil, with more industrial users proposing to suck up finite ground water.

Groundwater is mostly a non-renewable resource everywhere in the world. Just 6% of the global groundwater can be replenished and renewed within a span of 50 years.

Although there is seemingly a large volume of water available within 150 metres of the surface of the earth, much of it is trapped deep underground in aquifers that are not always rechargeable.

Xinyi is approaching our water as merely a manufacturing input - most of which is transformed in the manufacturing process. No one can say where that water ends up, but it isn't going to be available to use anytime soon. The profit that Xinyi makes from selling their product is private corporate profit - there is no benefit to the citizens of GET at all.

It is like a big mining company coming in....extracting the liquid resource, and leaving the residents with nothing. Even the residents' existing industry - which is mainly agricultural, will be decimated by the extraction of a resource that they depend on.



*The water taking competes with agricultural uses in the township... This area is the world's leader in agricultural technology and production – we develop ways to increase crop yields and make sure that people on the planet get fed...that is where our expertise has always been.*

**It is exploitation plain and simple!**

## WARRIORS WANTED

Responsibility for protecting our drinking water supply is one that we must all shoulder. It is a **social responsibility**.

While we expect that all levels of government will help us protect our water, our municipal government is often on the front line when risk raises its head. And though we expect a robust response from our front line, we don't often see it.

Part of the problem may be that jurisdiction over water taking overlaps at the local, provincial and federal levels, and it is too easy for local politicians to shrug it all off as something that is beyond their authority.

Since most water permitting is done by the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change (MOECC), we assume that they are the final arbiters of everything water.

In all of the policy language and the sheer volume of laws that the MOECC is expected to oversee, it is a **mistake** to think that it has sole ownership of water rights. We are not the puppets of government bureaucracies – **we are everyday warriors with a public duty to guard the front line.**

It is our job to make sure that the MOECC makes good on its mandate under the Environmental Bill of Rights to make sure that public protection is the driving force behind decision making.

# At GETconcerned, Water Day is Every Day!



**We find it remarkable** that in the series of carefully scripted full-page ads put out by Xinyi in response to GETconcerned campaign efforts, that **not a word is mentioned about the real issue - WATER usage.**

By now, we are familiar with the figure of 1.6 million litres of water per day that Xinyi has suggested.

GETconcerned knows that the figure used by Xinyi is understated and does not account for water uses for other purposes:

- Plans show the intention to expand production to a third line. By extrapolation, a third line will require 2.4 million litres of water daily
- What amount of water is required for the dormitory buildings and corporate campus?
- What amount of water is required for firefighting purposes? All businesses in the GET are **required to have a cistern on site for fire emergencies since there are no fire hydrants in the township.**
- What amount of water is used daily in the dust controlling measures – wheel-washing basins for trucks and spray hoses to suppress dust for 100+ trucks?
- How is the effluent being handled? Where is it going?

It is estimated that the water usage by Xinyi would represent 40-60% of what the ENTIRE Township presently uses. And 66% of that water will be evaporated.

**Unbelievable but true, keep in mind that this water is being given away by GET for this use.**

***It is immoral to use GET drinking water this way!***

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## Help Us Help You:



**Donate**



**Participate**



**Join Us**

# On Being Responsible

Xinyi's proposal to locate a mega-plant to produce glass for the US market using OUR WATER (free of charge) while polluting air and surrounding lands has rendered the GET Mayor and Councilors senseless.

Our Township government has somehow forgotten to ask all the important questions it must ask as responsible politicians, and it is clear that these officials completely lack any sense of good planning, common sense, or even curiosity about how this plant will impact the residents and ratepayers of GET.

Immediately, the size of the proposed plant and its water taking requirements alone should have raised a few questions at Township Council....like the need for **their own** hydrogeology report and an agricultural impact study at the very least.

*It's not about whether Xinyi Glass is good or bad. It's about a project too large for the site, in an area that cannot sustain it, and a government that is more obligated to the interests of a foreign corporation than to its own citizens.*

Yet, neither the Mayor nor Councilors have thought to ask for any independent studies that would answer the questions about this development, or validate the reports put forth by

the agencies hired by Xinyi Glass. Mayor White has justified this absence of due diligence as due to "lack of funds to do so".

**The truth is**, GET has never had to contemplate a development of this size or type. Our Mayor and Council are unprepared and lack the experience to grapple with a development proposal of this complexity.

It is also evident that Mayor White and Council do not have a cohesive vision for our Township.

To contemplate and entertain the Xinyi proposal as being suitable and fitting in with our Community highlights the fact that they are out of touch with the desires of the residents and a vision that resonates with us.

## The Interim Control Bylaw

### What is the Interim Control Bylaw (ICBL) and Why is it important?

Interim control bylaws put a temporary freeze on some land uses while the municipality is studying or reviewing its policies.

It is a mechanism council can use to stop, assess, consider, study, and analyze the site and the implications of any development.

**An ICBL would assist our Township to make better and more informed decisions with regards to the Xinyi proposal.**

This would be of great value given the sheer size, complexity, and emerging information on this development.

In order to get an ICBL passed it needs to be passed by a majority vote at Council.