



Editorial: Let's move ahead with gasification study

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There are a few questions, naturally.

But we think its still a good idea for the Koochiching County Board to move ahead with studying the feasibility of a plasma gasification plant. The plant -- going under the moniker of the International Falls Renewable Energy Clean Air Project, or RECAP -- would be fueled with garbage refuse and generate heat and energy.

It uses technology that combines a heat and power plant powered by plasma gasification. The system could provide electricity, heat, steam and hot water to create other value-added products, such as tiles and insulation.

Under the preliminary proposal, the facility would be located in International Falls on Koochiching County land.

It's still early in this process, but we think there is enough potential that the county board needs to look further into this proposal.

Dealing with refuse this way beats the current method -- burying garbage in a landfill hundreds of miles away in Kittson County. Doing so costs the county \$1 million annually to dispose of its solid waste. The garbage generated here is trucked to a landfill in Kittson County in northwestern Minnesota. While the method has worked for years, the contract leaves the county somewhat hostage to changing circumstances. It would obviously be better if we could deal with our refuse generation right here in a sound way.

Economically, the plant would mean jobs in our community. Needed jobs that would pay decent wages for residents.

One of the problems whenever a proposal such as this is announced is that untruths and falsehoods are passed off as fact.

While its fine to have honest questions about what this proposed project would entail, we hope the discussion involves the facts.

Let's learn more about this process and what its potential could be for our county and city.