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## UPDATE – Some aborted babies burned to generate electricity

Thursday, 24 April 2014 08:25



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**Health Ministry washes its hands of disposal of fetal tissue in Oregon waste-to-energy plant**  
By Steve Weatherbe  
Special to The B.C. Catholic  
VICTORIA

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Caption: Rachel's Garden at the Gardens of Gethsemani in south Surrey provides a place to pray for and remember children who have died before birth. BCC file photo.

The remains of British Columbia's aborted and miscarried children are ending up in an Oregon waste-to-power plant,

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likely mixed with everyday trash, incinerated to provide electricity to the people of Marion County.

So admits the B.C. Health Ministry. Though no ministry official was willing to put his or her name to the following statement, the communications branch emailed *The B.C. Catholic* that "biomedical waste," including "human tissue, such as surgically removed cancerous tissue, amputated limbs, and fetal tissue," is "disposed of through appropriate contracted providers."

It added, "The ministry understands that some is transferred to Oregon. There it is incinerated in a waste-to-energy plant."

Health Minister Terry Lake had not by press time responded to questions from *The B.C. Catholic* as to whether he believed the people of B.C. would want miscarried and aborted fetuses mixed with other garbage and burned to generate electricity.

The ministry stressed in its statement that contractors handling B.C.'s human "biomedical waste" all followed "health and safety protocols, as well as federal, provincial, and local regulations," but then said all such waste is "sent outside the province" where, presumably, none of the above applies.

"Pontius Pilate would be proud," said John Hof, president of United for Life, a B.C. pro-life lobby group. He added, "This points to a ludicrous disconnect in our society."

Referring to this week's conviction of Sarah Leung for double infanticide in B.C. Supreme Court, he said, "We can convict someone of infanticide for disposing of a newborn baby, but if she had done it two weeks earlier there would be no penalty, and the body would be on its way into the Oregon power grid."

The disclosure that British hospitals were putting aborted and miscarried babies into their power plants was a one-day wonder in that country's tabloids last month. One issue there was that parents of miscarried children had not been advised of the ultimate fate of their children's remains.

In B.C., the Health Ministry states, all parents of miscarried children are given the option of securing conventional funeral and burial services. Few, if any, of the remains of the province's more than 14,000 unborn babies aborted each year receive this courtesy.

The likeliest destination for their remains is the Covanta Marion "waste-to-energy" plant in Brooks, Ore. According to Kristan Mitchell, executive director of the Oregon Refuse and Recycling Association, this is its only member generating energy from garbage. Covanta Marion is a cooperative effort of Marion County and Covanta, a national waste management operation.

A 2007 story in the Willamette Live newspaper, ironically titled, "Burn, Baby, Burn," indicated the Brooks plant was at that time incinerating 800 tons of medical waste yearly. Covanta Marion spokesman Russel [sic] Johnston told the paper that this amounted to "less than half of one per cent of the total waste burned" and that the medical waste came "in sealed boxes and is carried to the furnace on a conveyor belt which layers it with the rest of the solid waste being processed."

However many local residents were concerned about the impact of the operation, particularly of the "imported medical waste," on the county's air quality.

Last week Covanta Marion spokesman Darby Randklev confirmed the plant was still taking medical waste from B.C. via Stericycle, an international waste management company with an operation in Port Coquitlam. As to whether Covanta's B.C. waste stream included the remains of miscarried or aborted babies, Randklev told *The B.C. Catholic*, "I couldn't tell you about that."

Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, of Vancouver described his shock at learning of the use of fetal tissue to generate heat or energy in Britain.

"Now it appears from the B.C. Health Ministry that some fetal tissue, from either abortions or miscarriages, ends up being used for power in Oregon. This is a tragic consequence of the pretense that fetuses are not human; if they're not persons, it is claimed, they are the same as removed appendixes and can be disposed of for any purpose whatsoever."

The archbishop noted that Catholic cemeteries in the Archdiocese of Vancouver provide space for burying aborted and miscarried children.

Peter Nobes, the director of Catholic Cemeteries of the Archdiocese of Vancouver, explained, "Within the children's burial section is an area for the unborn. Families can inter their fetus, and a memorial plaque option is available."

The funeral rite is also available for families, a "dignified service at a time of their loss," Nobes added. However, they must make arrangements with their pastor.

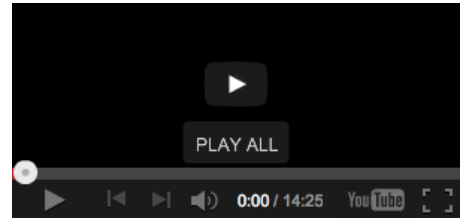
"We offer this because of the Church's teaching that life begins at conception, and out of dignity and respect for the human being, even though birth did not occur," Nobes concluded.

**UPDATE – In response to The B.C. Catholic article published April 21, the Marion County Board of Commissioners has decided – at least temporarily – to stop accepting medical waste from B.C.**

*The board convened for an emergency meeting April 24 at 9 a.m., in Salem, Oregon., and released a statement.*

*Commissioner Sam Brentano, the chairman, said, "We thought our ordinance excluded this type of material at the waste-to-energy facility. We will take immediate action to ensure a process is developed to prohibit human tissue from future deliveries."*

*"We are outraged and disgusted that this material could be included in medical waste received at the facility," said Commissioner Janet Carlson. "We did not know this practice was occurring until today. We are taking immediate action and initiating discussions with Covanta Marion to make certain that this type of medical waste is not accepted in the future."*



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