

Controversy surrounds British water plant

May 23 2006

Critics are reportedly increasing their opposition to the construction of Britain's first plant designed to turn salt water into drinking water.

London Mayor Ken Livingstone says the project should be abandoned because better, cleaner, cheaper and less wasteful alternatives to a \$377 million "energy-guzzling and carbon-intensive" desalination plant are needed to cope with London's water shortage, The London Evening Standard reported Tuesday.

Thames Water is appealing Livingstone's decision to block permission for the plant along the north bank of the River Thames. Representatives of the company argue the plant would become an "indispensable" asset, providing the "necessary security and resilience" for London's water supply.

But John Hodgson, representing Livingstone, said, "Every single day Thames Water leaks a staggering 915 million liters (242 million gallons) of clean, purified drinking water from Thames's own pipes -- six-and-one-half times the capacity of the proposed desalination plant -- 800 million liters (211 million gallons) from London itself."

Hodgson also said such a plant would increase global warming by sending more than 150 tonnes (165 tons) of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each day -- about 22,600 tonnes (24,912 tons) annually.

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Citation: Controversy surrounds British water plant (2006, May 23) retrieved 10 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-05-controversy-british.html>

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