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Incinerator plan canceled

By **JULIE CAMPBELL**

Herald Staff Writer

Some local residents who were fuming five years ago at the thought of a hazardous waste incinerator near Gulf are applauding ThermalKEM Inc.'s decision to leave the state.

ThermalKEM was greeted with groups of angry folks from Lee and Chatham counties when the company was considering a site in the flood plain of the Deep River to build the incinerator in the late 1980s. Similar opposition was voiced in other communities across the state.

"There's been 25 different fights against this thing across the state," said Billie Elmore of

"There's been 25 different fights against this thing across the state ... I'm ecstatic about this decision. We knew this was the last big fight against this project."

□ **BILLIE ELMORE**
N.C. WARN leader

Sanford, now head of N.C. WARN (Waste Awareness and Reduction Network). "I'm ecstatic about this decision. We knew this was the last big fight against this project."

On Thursday, the company said it would back out of Woodland in Northampton County. And would consider no other locations in the state now. Ther-

malKEM cited a lack of support from state officials as a factor in its decision to end a three-year, \$4 million bid to build the incinerator.

The company said it no longer enjoys the support it received under former Gov. Jim Martin. ThermalKEM said in a statement that the proposed facility had been backed by the Martin

administration, the North Carolina business community and a group of Northampton County citizens.

"The abolishment of the Hazardous Waste Management Commission and the abolishment of the Governor's Waste Management Board are indicative of the lack of support by the state's elected officials for the

siting of a waste management facility in the state," the statement read.

Charles Oldham and Mary Thornton Yarborough, who both helped fight the incinerator locally, said there's no reason for the state to support building such an incinerator when studies have shown that the nation doesn't need another one.

"Why would the state support something that's not needed?" Oldham asked, adding that now Lt. Gov. Dennis Wicker helped communicate to the state's legislature the problems local officials saw with the incinerator.

□ See **WASTE** on 13A