

Proforma D

INQUIRY INTO 'ENERGY FROM WASTE' TECHNOLOGY

Name: Proforma D – Blacktown residents' opposition to proposed incinerator

Number received: 11

My submission is a general one, but also as a Blacktown resident, this submission speaks in support of the people living in the suburbs near the current proposed incinerator in Western Sydney.

As an individual, I am very keen to see recycling efforts expanded in every corner of our world. However, I am deeply sceptical of the 'greenness' of this proposed technology. As a matter of principle, I do not support what are known as 'hot' or 'thermal' technologies' i.e. ones that burn waste and destroy the resource permanently.

I am more likely to support 'cool' technologies which treat waste while extracting energy without destroying the resource or creating toxic emissions.

As the National Toxics Network has detailed to us, some reasons to not support such waste burning technologies include:

1. They release toxic and carcinogenic air pollutants. As a signatory to the Stockholm Convention, we are obliged to reduce, and where feasible, eliminate sources of dioxins and furans.
2. They produce toxic ash.
3. They are the dirtiest form of energy production. Waste burning facilities produce far more carbon dioxide per unit of energy generated than coal, oil or gas fired power stations.
4. They destroy resources which could be reused, as well as the energy embedded in the waste, which is then lost.
5. They undermine smarter and better recycling efforts.
6. They stifle innovation in other, better, cleaner technologies, and undermine real renewable energy.
7. They entrench an archaic economic structure which relies on the extraction of virgin materials and rewards consumptive and wasteful lifestyle choices.

Our society needs to transition as soon as possible to a circular economy where resources are not destroyed through landfills or incineration but rather are conserved through reuse, recycling and composting schemes generally known as zero waste solutions.

For these reasons, I strongly object to these technologies. I appreciate the opportunity to express this view to the inquiry, and hope that it leads to a better outcome for recycling not only in my local area of Blacktown, but also across Australia and around the world.