

**Submission
No 141**

**INQUIRY INTO PERFORMANCE OF THE NSW
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY**

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INQUIRY INTO THE PERFORMANCE OF THE NSW ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY

It seems clear to many that the EPA is failing in its duty to monitor and police air quality in the micro environments surrounding domestic solid fuel burning heaters.

The high concentrations of particulate PM_{2.5} pollutants that surround most wood burning heaters, particularly in urban areas, (including those allegedly AS4013 compliant ones) are effectively ignored by the EPA who passes the problem off to local Councils to manage with inadequate, untrained human resources and a useless compliance tool in the form of the POEO Act that relies on visible "smoke" to identify polluters when they know full well that the greatest health risk comes from the virtually invisible PM_{2.5}s emitted by "modern" heaters.

The EPA needs to publicly acknowledge that all solid fuel heaters emit toxic pollutants, and to implement policies and strategies to phase out and ultimately ban the use of solid fuel heaters in all built up urban areas, as it has done with back yard burning and as is favoured by the NSW Chief Health Officer.

A method to fund the monitoring and policing of point source pollution and to pay for a substantial buy-back scheme the government could introduce a pollution tax based on firewood burnt. This could be imposed on firewood sellers and implemented with the inclusion and co-operation of the FAA-- and a big stick.