

Submission
No 336

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE
FACILITIES**

Name: Mrs Merren Davey

Date Received: 19 October 2025

Partially
Confidential

To whom it may concern

I am writing to register my opposition to the proposed Parkes Waste to Energy Incinerator.

As a parent and grandparent with most of my family living in this community, and with my grandchildren attending the _____, I am deeply concerned about the health risks associated with this project. The potential health risks from toxic emissions like dioxins and fine particles should not be underestimated. An incinerator burning a minimum of 600,000 T of garbage/ year (possibly up to 1.2 million T/year!) provides a constant low level exposure of these toxins to everyone living within the vicinity of the incinerator, which in reality is the whole of the township of Parkes, and surrounds. There are no guarantees that we won't end up with a community suffering increased illnesses as a result of this project. Those who have current vulnerabilities will be the most at risk.

Even the risk of smells impacting on the children at school is worrying. It was said that the pet food factory located in the Parkes SAP would not have an impact as great as 5kms, yet the children at the school have to put up with the smell of that, when the wind is in the direction of the school.

Additionally the risks posed to our agricultural community are too great. As farmers we are very worried about the security of our food production into the future. Parkes is a major food producer, and this project threatens our clean air, water and soil quality. Even a perceived risk, as well as contamination, threatens our agricultural sector. We have the benefit of hindsight from other facilities. Even the most up-to date Harlingen incinerator built in 2011, with the most modern filters has evidence of dioxins build up in the surrounding environment. The "Australian Public Health Association" did a review of a whole range of health impacts from Incinerators which was considered to be a "conservative" review. Their conclusion was:

- Do not grow food around incinerators
- Do not cite incinerators in agricultural regions. (Public Health Australia policy on Waste Incineration)

There is so much information about the long term harmful effects of EFW incinerators from multiple sources around the world. We cannot ignore this evidence. The more I read and hear, the more concerned I am about this potential incinerator being built in our clean green agricultural community right next to town.

What is going to happen to the toxic waste as a result of the burning process? I have heard that it will be used as road base which would further compound the toxic contamination issues and spread the problem even further across our state, not just affecting agricultural land but all our waterways as well! There are areas across our state that are already struggling with forever chemicals in the waterways and across land. We do not want this to happen in our area!

I am also concerned about the number of people that will potentially leave Parkes if this incinerator goes ahead. I know of several people who are talking of leaving ...Teachers, nurses, doctors!! We already have enormous difficulty in attracting Doctors, and other health professionals to our town. This problem is only going to be compounded! Will our population increase, stay the same, or diminish as a result of this project? Only time will tell, however I suspect that the following saying will be the case....."You win some, you lose more." This is too big a gamble.

Another issue of concern are the flies, rats, smell and noise that has affected people in the UK who live near an incinerator. (*"We have been inundated with flies, rats, smell, noise. It's just been horrendous," says Mandy Royle, who lives in the closest home to the UK's biggest waste incinerator at Runcorn in Cheshire.* 16 October 2024 Esme Stallard, Matt McGrath, Patrick Clahane & Paul Lynch BBC News). These issues all pose physical and mental health risks.

These incinerators have been banned from Western Sydney, and from NSW except for four regional areas. The ACT has banned them. The risks were deemed to be too great! Why should Parkes have to take the risks of burning Sydney's rubbish? Is it because we only have a small population comparatively so therefore it doesn't matter? Everyone should have the same health protections.

I strongly urge you to reject this proposal, and actively fight against it, in order to protect the health and safety of our people, our environment, our agricultural industry, and the businesses in our town. Our community should be protected from being the dumping ground for Sydney's waste. The risks are far too great, and certainly greater than any possible benefits. There are many, many people in Parkes who oppose this incinerator and are desperate that it does not go ahead.

Kind regards,

Merren Davey