

Submission
No 609

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE
FACILITIES**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 14 October 2025

Partially
Confidential

I am a wife and mother of four fur babies and we are about to embark on the journey of adopting a child. We live in Tarago where a Toxic waste Incinerator has been proposed. We have lived here in this blissful regional area since 2022, when we moved into our first brand new home, our first new home we built together. We have seen this little town of Tarago transform just in the short time that we have lived here with so many people moving to this area, building brand new homes, new businesses and activities on offer.

I am writing this submission to share my concerns and absolute objection of the proposed Tarago Toxic Waste Incinerator and any Incinerators for that matter.

Some TERMS OF REFERENCE I would like to speak about are;

(b) the spread of the emissions predicted and the quality of emissions to be generated. Toxic emissions (d) impacts on human health including on regional town drinking water, rainwater harvesting and soil contamination (e) the impact on agriculture locally and across the wider region (g) impacts of waste-dumping over a number of decades in the Tarago region (h) the methodology of emission monitoring employed by leading large scale waste-to-energy facilities in Australia and across the world (i) alternative solutions to reduce and manage residual waste produced by Greater Sydney.

Waste incineration is one of the major sources of dioxins and furans. They are produced by the combustion of chlorine-containing substances and organic matter at high temperatures. Dioxins and furans are present in both the fly ash and the stack emissions.

Dioxins and furans are highly toxic and can cause reproductive and developmental problems, damage the immune system, interfere with hormones and cause cancer.

Exposure to dioxins and furans has been shown to result in a wide range of adverse health effects, including:

- Skin lesions, such as chloracne and patchy darkening of the skin
- Altered liver function and liver toxicity
- Changes in hormone levels
- Damage to teeth
- Immune system impairment
- Developmental toxicity
- Reproductive toxicity, including increased infant mortality, decreased birth weight and growth, and impaired lung and heart development
- Wasting syndrome
- Cancer

Dioxins interfere with several biological processes that are key to embryonic and fetal development and are causally linked to poor birth outcomes.

References

[1] World Health Organization, 2023, 'Dioxins' Fact Sheet, accessed 10 April 2024, <
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/dioxins-and-their-effects-on-human-health>>

[2] Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 2024, 'Toxicological Profile for Chlorinated Dibenzo-p-Dioxins', U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

[3] Environment Australia, 1999, 'Incineration and dioxins: Review of formation processes', consultancy report prepared by Environmental and Safety Services for Environment Australia, Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage, Canberra.

If we don't stop Incinerators from being built then we are basically confirming being okay with all the negative outcomes listed above, to happen to anyone living in regional NSW, Canberra, greater Sydney or anyone consuming food and wine produced from these regions.

I am worried about the long-term health impacts from toxic emissions like dioxins and fine particles. I am worried that there is not a requirement for 24/7 monitoring of all emissions such as dioxins and lead because Tarago and surrounds are major food and wine producers. This project threatens our clean air, water and soil quality. Contamination, as well as any perceived risk, threatens our agricultural sector. Transporting waste over 500km and destroying valuable resources is not a sustainable or efficient waste solution, it locks us into waste generation and undermines waste reduction, reuse and recycling initiatives. Our family would be forced to move far away from Tarago if this proposed incinerator is not banned and we have spoken to many other residents and farmers with families who will also move away from Tarago. Tarago would then struggle to attract new people to the town. I'm concerned that Tarago will be being burdened with Sydney's waste problems. Burning waste from Sydney in Regional NSW unfairly burdens our community with Sydney's waste and the associated environmental, health and economic risks. Our family has already been impacted by Sydney's waster and the Veolia Tip by contaminated leachate into local waterways and foul odours not being contained from the tip. I am concerned this proposal threatens tourism, property prices and investment in Tarago and we have put our life on hold as to whether we further invest into Tarago because we are waiting on the outcome of this proposed incinerator. The regulation that prohibits thermal Energy from Waste in NSW but excludes four regional areas is not equitable. Everyone deserves the same health protections... The proposed location of the facility is surrounded by farms and residents who are reliant on tank water and the toxic ash that would settle in our drinking water would make our water undrinkable.

Please recommend that the Government reject Energy from Waste incineration, to protect the health and future of Regional NSW, all the residents and families that live here and our agriculture industries. Tarago and Canberra deserve a safe place to live, sustainable, safe industries and investments, that drive economic growth and value add to our agricultural sector and the community. Marketing communications from industry and Government that have mislead the community should be investigated. The community was not adequately consulted when key decisions were being made. Consultation requirements should not be tokenistic but a collaborative process, equal to the size of the development. These projects unfairly burden Regional NSW with Greater Sydney's waste and the associated risks. The Regulation should provide Regional NSW with the same precautionary health protections as Greater Sydney. These projects lock us into long term contracts of waste generation when **we should be investing in waste avoidance, reuse and recycling**. Other countries are phasing out thermal energy from waste. Australia should be using that experience, not ignoring it. I oppose this proposal and request that alternative waste management

solutions are investigated that do not pose a risk to the environment or human health, and do not cause distress to host communities. I request that government invest in more recycling facilities, recycling bins in regional areas not just cities and fulfill the environmental carbon reduction promises by supporting and investing in environmental beneficial solutions – not incinerators that have already been shown to be bad for the environment and human health, from evidence provided from other countries that have used incinerators.

As a Tarago resident I completely and whole heartedly oppose the proposed Tarago Incinerator and hope that our lives and health matter enough to have this proposed Incinerator idea burned!