

**Submission  
No 666**

## **INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE FACILITIES**

**Name:** Colin Carpenter  
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Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Proposed Energy-from-Waste Facilities in Regional NSW  
(Inquiry No. 3128)

Submitted by: Colin Carpenter

Location: Parkes Region, NSW

Date: October 2025

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## Cover Statement

To the Members of the Committee,

My name is Colin Carpenter, and I am a farmer, butcher, and grandfather who has proudly lived and worked within the Parkes Shire for more than 30 years.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Energy-from-Waste (EfW) incinerator near Parkes, NSW.

This project poses serious risks to human health, environmental safety, and agricultural viability in our region.

As someone who produces food for local families and regional markets, I am deeply concerned about the potential contamination of soil, water, and air, and the damage this could do to our reputation for clean and safe produce.

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## Introduction

For over three decades, my family and I have lived and worked in the Parkes area, investing heavily in our land and livestock. We are proud of the produce we supply to our community and the strong reputation our region holds for high-quality, safe, and trusted food.

The introduction of an EfW facility jeopardises that reputation and places unnecessary risk on the livelihoods of farming families. Once soil and water are compromised by toxins or heavy metals, the damage is irreversible — and it is the farmers who will bear those consequences.

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## Health, Air, and Water Concerns

Like many in our community, I am worried about the potential for toxic emissions and air pollutants from the incinerator, including dioxins, mercury, and ultrafine particles that cannot be fully filtered out.

These substances can enter the bloodstream, affect the lungs and immune system, and cause long-term harm to children, pregnant women, and the elderly.

Our region relies on bore water, creeks, and surface runoff for drinking, livestock, and crop irrigation. Any contamination from ash, leachate, or airborne fallout poses an unacceptable threat to these vital resources.

Once heavy metals or PFAS compounds enter groundwater or soil, they can persist for generations, contaminating crops and livestock — and with that, the very food people rely on.

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## Threat to Food Integrity and Farm Viability

As both a farmer and butcher, my livelihood depends on trust.

People want to know that their food is safe, clean, and locally produced.

Even the perception of contamination could destroy that trust — reducing market access, lowering prices, and causing lasting economic harm to primary producers.

The proposed incinerator puts the viability of regional agriculture at risk, not through any fault of the farmers, but through a decision made without their full consultation or consent.

Any breach, accident, or emission event would be catastrophic to local farming families who depend on their land for survival.

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### Community and Economic Impact

The Parkes region is built on community — on neighbours supporting neighbours, on small businesses, schools, and local events that thrive because people choose to live and raise their families here.

If the incinerator proceeds, it could drive families away from the district, weakening our community fabric and damaging local trade, employment, and investment.

Once people lose faith in the safety of their environment, they lose connection to their place. And once that happens, it is near impossible to rebuild.

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### Better Alternatives

There are smarter and safer solutions available that align with the circular economy.

The focus should be on:

- Phasing out single-use plastics,
- Mandating recyclable materials, and
- Investing in regional recycling and composting systems.

By addressing waste at the source, we can reduce the need for incineration altogether and protect rural communities from becoming dumping grounds for city waste.

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### Conclusion

The proposed Energy-from-Waste incinerator near Parkes represents a direct threat to the health, environment, and future of regional NSW.

For over 30 years, I have worked the land and served my community. I cannot stand by and watch decisions made that risk our air, our water, and our children's futures.

I urge the Committee to reject this proposal and prioritise genuine, community-led waste solutions that protect the land, livelihoods, and legacy of rural families across the Parkes region.

Sincerely,

Colin Carpenter

Parkes Region, NSW

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## References and Supporting Research

1. World Health Organization (WHO) – Health Effects of Waste Incineration: A Systematic Review (2019).
2. European Environment Agency (EEA) – Air Quality in Europe Report (2022).
3. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – Dioxins and Furans Toolkit (2021).
4. Australian Department of Health – Toxicological Review of Dioxins and Their Impact on Human Health (2020).
5. The Lancet Planetary Health – Prenatal and Childhood Exposure to Air Pollutants and Neurodevelopmental Outcomes (2021).
6. ANU National Centre for Epidemiology – Health and Environmental Impacts of Waste-to-Energy Facilities in Australia (2023).
7. Public Health England – Review of Epidemiological Evidence of Health Effects from Incineration (2014)