

**Submission
No 675**

INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE FACILITIES

Name: Ms Helen Gray
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My name is Helen Gray. I am a third generation farmer at Trundle, near Parkes, where we crop and have sheep. I have also worked as a registered nurse, and as a school teacher until quite recently. My children have grown up on this farm. My husband is the local doctor, who shares my views on this matter. I have multiple concerns about various aspects of this project. These include impacts of poisonous substances on agricultural land and produce, on health, future farming, social effects and economic effects.

My objection is related to the following points:

1. Potential for the release of toxic substances that might have an impact on Parkes and surrounding areas, affecting the health of its people now and into the future. Recent studies have shown that these plants can release toxic substances that can stay into the environment for extended periods of time. Despite reassurances, the information available demonstrates that the technology of these plants still allows for the emission of these byproducts.
2. Insufficient monitoring- my concern is that there will be inadequate monitoring of what substances are being released in real time, and that once released, there is no capacity to remove these substances from the environment.
3. Transport of Waste to Parkes from Sydney- I have huge concerns that this will not be conducted in a way that is not destructive to the environment. This transport of this massive amount of waste will require an enormous amount of energy compared to siting the plants in the Sydney basin.
4. Lack of consultation- I feel the level of consultation for such a monumental project has been insufficient and rushed. I understood there was development of a logistical precinct, but the reporting never reflected the true nature of this project until very recent times.
5. Tank water- the majority of rural households source all of their drinking water from rain water from tanks. Contamination of rooftop collection into people's sole source of drinking water is inevitable. This will affect the young, old, sick with unknown long term consequences- this includes ingestion of known carcinogenic toxins.
6. Health and Education- out in the Central West, we already have significant trouble attracting health and education professionals, and their families to our areas. The presence of a potentially toxic industry will surely majorly impact people's decisions to locate to the region, or for those already here, to stay! These factors just add to rural and isolated areas such as ours, to the problems we already have bringing people out here.
7. Effect on the food bowl- Parkes and surrounding areas produce significant amounts of crop and animal products for Australia and overseas. Why would we risk the soil and air quality of such a region that provides so much food for a nation? Studies show that these toxins stay in the soils and waters for a very long time into the future.

I cannot believe this project is even being considered for an agricultural area such as ours. If the byproducts make it unsafe to build in Sydney and surrounds, why on earth would it be safe to build in agricultural lands, with no consideration to food production, or the health of the community. Regional areas like Parkes deserve industries that will add value to the agricultural sector and its community, instead of industries that threaten the long term viability of these areas and their communities.