

**Submission
No 714**

INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE FACILITIES

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A copy of my submission for inspiration to others.

My name is Kylie Ellis ne Boehm I am born and bred in Parkes, living here all of my life (52 years). Growing up in Parkes I got to enjoy the many wonderful benefits that Parkes has to offer such as clean air, wonderful clear skies that at night you can see the stars, wide open spaces and the great people that reside in the local shire. I have also chosen to spend all of my working life in this town got married and raised a family on 10 acres just West of the township. I am surrounded by farms and all the beauty that goes with farming. I am writing this submission to strongly oppose the proposed waste-to-energy incinerator in Parkes. This incinerator if it is allowed to be built in our wonderful community will destroy the very reasons I have lived and loved this place for all of my life.

1: Water Concerns

The waste to energy facility uses water to run and cool the facility, in 2017 to 2019 we suffered through drought in the Parkes District and broader communities. Parkes ran out of water and had to bring boar water in from the nearby town of Forbes. Despite this Parkes was on the highest water restrictions available to council for up to 3 years the local brick pit which was a hole dug into the ground that was used to make bricks is deep enough for the water table to be exposed.

Local are allowed to use this water for things such as road construction, farmers to fill dams and locals to keep plants and grass alive when the local water supply is running dry. During this drought the brick pit ran out of water, many older locals noted this is the first time in their memory that this had occurred. Do the operators expect Parkes to be on water restriction full time so they can run this facility. Parkes is not built near a river, as such water is a scarce commodity in this town and any extra load on this precious commodity needs to be in the interest of the township not a business that is all about profits not the community.

2. Environmental and Health Concerns

Despite assurances from the proponents of this facility that emissions will be “safe,” evidence from international sites that have these facilities shows that waste-to-energy plants release toxic pollutants — including dioxins, heavy metals, PFAS, and other persistent organic pollutants — which contaminate soil, crops, water, and livestock.

A 2023 ScienceDirect review found that people living near incinerators face higher risks of respiratory disease, congenital abnormalities, and certain cancers (ScienceDirect, 2023). Toxics Free Australia (2024) confirmed that ash from incinerators contains long-lasting chemicals that threaten both public health and agriculture. The Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA) has also warned that “contamination of food and ingestion of pollutants from incineration is a significant risk pathway” (PHAA, Waste Incineration and Health Report).

Globally, these concerns are echoed by major research institutions:

- The IPEN Report (2023), “Waste Incineration Drives the Triple Planetary Crisis,” found that incineration contributes to toxic pollution, climate change, and biodiversity loss ([IPEN.org](https://ipen.org)).
- A study of 96 incinerators across China revealed measurable health risks from emissions and particulate fallout (ScienceDirect, 2024).
- PLOS Climate (2023) concluded that U.S. waste incinerators emit more greenhouse gases per kilowatt-hour than many fossil fuel sources, undermining clean-energy goals.
- A ClientEarth report (2022) found that incinerators across Europe contribute to higher local air-pollution burdens than landfills and discourage recycling efforts.

These findings directly contradict claims that waste-to-energy facilities are “clean” or “safe.” The only acceptable exposure level for communities like ours is zero.

3. Agricultural and Community Impact

As stated prior in this submission I live on 10 acres with the only water supply to my home being tanks that collect rainwater from my roofs, if any toxins are released from this plant which many studies from around the world do this would contaminate my drinking water, shower water and cleaning water supply.

The same for all other people living on small hobby farms and farmers alike. The stock that feeds our nation could also end up being affected and in some cases around the world the food that is grown or bred around these incinerators can not be sold for human consumption.

A NSW Government report (2022) on incinerator risks acknowledges that many health and ecological effects may take years to appear and persist long after the facility begins operation. This confirms that the long-term risks will be borne not by the waste producers in Sydney, but by regional communities like ours.

The region should not be forced to deal with Sydney’s waste problems which could turn into bigger long term affects on thousands of peoples health.



4. Professional Shortage

I have previously mentioned in this submission some of the wonderful reasons for living in this Parkes such as the friendly and welcoming people, clean air and clear sky’s but one disadvantage living in Parkes is the lack of Doctors and Health professionals. It hard to attract these professionals to this township

they all seem to like the bright lights and fast paced life of the cities. To my shock two of these health professionals that I regularly visit has stated to me that if this incinerator goes ahead they will be leaving Parkes, they do not think the risk is worth bringing their kids up in a place which burns plastic and other contaminates. What will this mean for our town if you cannot get medical help when required.

5. Location

If as the proponents of the incinerator tell us it is safe why is this facility being built in Parkes and not Sydney where the waste is coming from to fuel the incinerator. It does not make sense from a financial or environment point of view to send all the waste 360km to Parkes, instead of just building this facility in Sydney. If its deemed not safe to build in Sydney why is it safe in Parkes ? Are we second class citizens ?, Isn't Parkes and surrounding communities residents health as important as those in Sydney ?.

Conclusion:

I fail to understand how a facility could be built knowing there is potential for health risks for humans, Back in the 1950's in Australia the "experts" told people that Bex was safe and it turned out it killed people through kidney disease, Asbestos was promoted as a safe product which has affected the health of millions of Australian's. These two examples still are causing ongoing health issues to Australian's and are an ongoing financial burden on society. The risk to building this facility far outweighs any benefit to any Australian. If I have this all wrong and it is safe then just build it in Sydney and save the costs and environment impact that come with transporting it 360km to Parkes.

I strongly oppose the building of a Incinerator that burns plastic and has the potential to cause irreparable to the land, agriculture and humans into the future which can not be reversed.

References

Australian Sources

1. Toxics Free Australia (2024). "New Report Released on Waste-to-Energy Incineration." toxicsfreeaustralia.org.au
2. ScienceDirect (2023). "The Health Impacts of Waste Incineration: A Systematic Review." sciencedirect.com
3. Public Health Association of Australia (PHAA). "Waste Incineration and Health Report." zerowasteaustralia.org
4. NSW Department of Planning and Environment (2022). "Waste-to-Energy Incinerator Dangers – Technical Assessment." majorprojects.planningportal.nsw.gov.au

International Sources

5. Reuters (2024). "To Get to Zero Waste, Hundreds of European Cities Are Spurning Incineration." reuters.com

6. PLOS Climate (2023). "Waste Incinerators Undermine Clean Energy Goals." journals.plos.org
7. ClientEarth (2022). "What Are the Environmental Impacts of Waste Incineration?" clientearth.org
8. ScienceDirect (2024). "Health Risk Assessment of Municipal Solid Waste Incineration Emissions in China." sciencedirect.com
9. ScienceDirect (2025). "Systematic Review on Environmental Impact Assessment of Incineration." sciencedirect.com
10. IPEN (2023). "Report: Waste Incineration Drives the Triple Planetary Crisis." ipen.org

[Lesley Crowe](#)

I have been watching and reading some of these excellent articles. No. 4. NSW DPE (2022) the majorprojects.planningportal.nsw.gov.au

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