

Submission  
No 735

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE  
FACILITIES**

**Name:** Name suppressed

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Partially  
Confidential

# Submission to the Select Committee on the Parliamentary Inquiry into Waste-to-Energy

From: \_\_\_\_\_, Eugowra Resident

Subject: Strong Opposition to the Proposed Energy-from-Waste (EfW) facility in Parkes

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## Introduction and Personal Background

My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am a resident of Eugowra, a small rural town in Central West New South Wales. Eugowra is surrounded by productive farmland, where generations of families have worked to grow crops, raise livestock, and contribute to Australia's food and fibre industries.

Our community values clean air, healthy soil, and a peaceful country lifestyle. We are a proud and resilient people who have already faced immense hardship in recent years, particularly from the devastating floods that destroyed homes, livelihoods, and infrastructure. Many residents continue to suffer emotionally and financially as we rebuild our town. We are some of those residents having had a metre of water inundate our property and cause substantial damage.

It is from this perspective - as a long-term resident, mother, grandmother, and community member - that I express my strong opposition to the proposed Energy-from-Waste (EfW) facility.

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## Air and Soil Contamination Risks

An (EfW) incinerator would emit a range of pollutants from its stack, including fine particulates (PM2.5 and PM10), heavy metals such as mercury and cadmium, and persistent organic pollutants like dioxins and furans. These contaminants can travel long distances before settling on land, crops, and water systems.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), these substances can accumulate in soil and the food chain, posing serious and long-lasting risks to both the environment and human health. The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) also recognises that dioxins and heavy metals are particularly hazardous and must be tightly controlled - yet history shows that even with the best technology, emissions from incinerators are never completely contained.

In a rural area like Eugowra, where farming and food production are central to our way of life, this risk is completely unacceptable. Contaminated soil cannot be easily

restored, and once pollutants enter the ecosystem, they may persist for decades. The very idea of “clean, country-grown food” - something our region takes great pride in - would be compromised.

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## **Health Impacts on Current and Future Generations**

Breathing in pollutants from incinerator emissions can cause serious long-term health problems, including respiratory and cardiovascular disease, cancers, and developmental effects in children. The WHO and Australian Medical Association (AMA) both recognise that even low-level exposure to fine particulate matter can harm human health over time.

For a small town like Eugowra, where access to medical services and specialists is already limited, introducing a new health hazard is deeply unfair. Many residents must travel long distances to see a doctor or mental health professional. Our existing healthcare system is stretched thin — adding pollution-related illnesses to this burden would worsen an already difficult situation.

As a mother and grandmother, I am profoundly worried about what this means for our children and grandchildren, and for generations yet to come. Once the damage to health and environment is done, it cannot simply be reversed.

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## **Social and Emotional Impacts**

The people of Eugowra are still recovering from the trauma of catastrophic flooding. Many have lost homes, farmland, and their sense of security. Our community spirit remains strong, but our wellbeing is fragile. Access to mental health support is minimal, and many residents continue to experience anxiety and distress from what we have already endured.

The prospect of an industrial incinerator in or near our region would be another heavy blow - emotionally, psychologically, and socially. It would bring constant worry about air quality, property safety, and food contamination. Instead of hope for the future, many would feel despair at the thought of more harm being imposed on a community already struggling to recover.

We should be receiving support for healing, health, and resilience - not a project that threatens to undo everything we've worked so hard to rebuild.

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## **Impacts on Food and Fibre Production**

Eugowra and surrounding areas are part of a vital food and fibre network, producing grains, meat, and wool that support local families and national supply chains. The introduction of an EfW plant near such productive land is contrary to common sense and good planning.

The WHO and EPA both advise against locating incinerators near agricultural zones because toxic residues can enter crops and livestock, contaminating the food supply and damaging market confidence. Even the perception of contamination can lead consumers to avoid produce from the region, harming local farmers and the broader rural economy.

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### **Property and Economic Impacts**

Beyond health and environmental concerns, an EfW facility would have a devastating impact on property values in and around Eugowra. No one wants to live, invest, or raise a family near a waste incinerator. Over time, this could lead to falling real estate prices, reduced resale potential, and in some cases, unliveable or unsellable properties.

For a small rural community where many residents' life savings are tied up in their homes or farms, this loss of property value would be catastrophic. It represents not just financial harm, but a profound loss of security and dignity.

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### **Conclusion and Formal Request**

Eugowra is a small town with a big heart. We have endured floods, trauma, and hardship - yet we continue to rebuild with courage and community spirit. The proposed Energy-from-Waste facility would undo so much of that hard-won progress. It would threaten our air, soil, health, and livelihoods, and compromise the wellbeing of both current and future generations.

I strongly urge the Select Committee to reject this proposal outright. Rural communities like Eugowra deserve protection and investment, not further environmental and emotional harm. Once the air and soil are polluted, they cannot be restored. Please stand with the people of Eugowra and other affected towns to ensure that our towns, our land, and our future remain safe.

Signed,

Eugowra, NSW

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## References

- World Health Organization (WHO). *Waste Incineration and Public Health* (2019).
  - NSW Environment Protection Authority ( ). *Hazardous Air Pollutants and Dioxins Overview* (2024).
  - Australian Medical Association (AMA). *Air Pollution and Health Impacts Statement* (2023).
  - NSW Government Department of Primary Industries. *Guidelines for Protecting Agricultural Land from Industrial Contamination* (2023).
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