

Submission  
No 771

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE  
FACILITIES**

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 22 October 2025

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Partially  
Confidential

# Submission to the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Proposed Energy from Waste Facilities in Regional NSW

## Personal Details

Name:

Address:

Contact:

Date: 20 October 2025

Confidentiality: I request that my personal details remain confidential, but the submission may be published.

Hearing: I am willing to give evidence at a hearing.

## Introduction

I'm a retired teacher and local resident of Parkes where I've raised my family and now watch my grandchildren grow. I'm a proud member of this community and I'm very much against the proposed Energy from Waste (EfW) incinerator in Parkes. My submission addresses the Inquiry's Terms of Reference, including:

1. Health impacts (c and d)
2. Agricultural impacts (e)
3. Emissions (b)
4. Alternative waste solutions (i); and
5. Other related matters (j)

I'm worried about what this project means for my family, the children of our community, our town, and our future.

## Concerns and Evidence

This incinerator is already putting undue strain on Parkes. People are hesitant to move here or start businesses because of it, which stops our community from growing. We need new people and investment to keep services like doctors, shops and schools going strong. Without them our town won't thrive and that will affect families like mine. As my grandchildren need a lively, supported community to grow up in they will consider moving out of the area in the future to raise their children if this incinerator goes ahead.

There's not enough solid proof this incinerator is safe. There's a real lack of data to show it won't harm our health. The World Health Organisation (1) has raised concerns about toxic emissions from incineration like dioxins, and many residents are concerned about fine particles getting into our air, tank water (which I rely on completely), our town bore water supply levels and soil condition.

My grandchildren go to school very close to the proposed site of this incinerator and it is unknown what impact it will have on their long term health. Parkes is a food bowl and any contamination, or even the fear of it, could wreck our farming economy and the clean food we grow. We might not see the damage for years, but that's too big a risk for our children and land.

I am concerned that house prices will take a hit if this incinerator goes ahead. Nobody wants to live in a town with a smelly incinerator nearby. Our homes are our life's work and this could wipe out their value, leaving families like mine stuck.

Look at places like France, England, Spain, and Germany, they've had these incinerators and found big problems. Studies show toxic pollution like PFAS in soil and air near these plants, harming health and the environment (2). They're closing them down or phasing them out because they're too costly or can't get enough rubbish to keep them running economically. In Western Australia, the Kwinana waste-to-energy plant has cost more than expected and faced community backlash. If it's failing in other places why bring it here?

Bringing Sydney's rubbish over 500km to Parkes by train is a disaster for the environment with all the fumes burning fossil fuels, the risk of fire from unsorted rubbish with batteries (3) and the excessive costs.

Thermal EfW is banned in the ACT and most of NSW because of health risks but Parkes, Goulburn, Lithgow and Richmond Valley got left out. Why? If it's not safe for Sydney it's not safe for us. It's just not fair to dump their waste problems on our town.

The real issue is packaging waste from corporations like soft plastics that are not being recycled. They should be made to pay for the mess they create and find innovative solutions, not Parkes residents dealing with the fallout.

Worst of all many residents in our community feel that our local council, past and present, hasn't been open about this proposal. They've kept things quiet (4) when there are questions relating to the selling of the land to the State government for this project and at least one councillor has been told to be "careful what he says" at the latest public meeting. That's not right, it's dodging the honest process we expect in a place like Parkes and it is dividing our community.

## **Recommendations**

I urge the Committee to recommend rejecting the Parkes Energy from Waste incinerator to protect our health, farms, children and community. Instead, let's focus on:

- Better waste solutions like recycling, reuse, or non-thermal technologies that don't risk our air, water, or soil.
- Making packaging manufacturers pay for their waste or find innovative solutions, not burden regional towns like ours.
- Fair regulations that give Parkes the same health protections as Sydney and Canberra.
- Proper, open consultation with our community, not secret deals or silenced councillors.
- If this goes ahead, demand uninterrupted and consistent 24/7 independent emissions monitoring (including dioxins) on a public portal, baseline health and environmental testing and a compensation fund for any future harm.

## **Closing Statement**

Parkes is a great town with clean air, good soil and a strong community. This incinerator threatens all that and I'm worried for my grandchildren's and our community's future. Please stop this project and invest in safe, sustainable ways to handle waste that won't hurt regional towns. We deserve better than being Sydney's rubbish dump.

Signed

Parkes, NSW

## References

1. Dioxins from Incinerators: A WHO fact sheet confirms dioxins are highly toxic by-products of waste incineration, persisting in the environment for 15-20 years and bioaccumulating in food chains. They cause immune suppression, reproductive issues, and cancer. Uncontrolled incinerators are major sources.  
<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/dioxins-and-their-effects-on-human-health>
2. PFAS Contamination in Europe: Zero Waste Europe studies (2025) in Spain, France, and the Netherlands found PFAS in soil, water, eggs, and moss near incinerators—up to 300 times baseline levels. Eggs exceeded EU limits, with health risks from ingestion. France’s health agency confirmed unsafe backyard eggs due to PFAS and dioxins.  
<https://zerowasteurope.eu/press-release/new-data-links-waste-incinerators-to-toxic-contamination-in-surrounding-environments-spain-france-netherlands/>
3. Fire and Safety Risks: EPA warned of accidents/spills from unsorted waste (batteries) and waste transport investigations flagged fossil fuel use and safety concerns.  
<https://www.smh.com.au/environment/nsw-waste-still-travelling-across-state-borders-prompting-epa-investigations-20160212-gmsnyn.html>
4. Lack of Consultation: Parkes Clean Future Alliance (2025) states residents weren’t consulted during 2019 precinct planning or 2022 EPA review; many learned of the project in 2025 post-decisions. Process lacks transparency and social license. <https://parkescleanfuture.org>