

**Submission
No 809**

INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE FACILITIES

Name: Miss Libby Pepper

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Submission Against the Proposed Parkes Waste Incinerator

My name is Libby Pepper. I have been a resident of Parkes for over 15 years. I work in the healthcare sector and am passionate about providing care that assists our regional population in achieving better health outcomes. Growing up in this small country town, I have grown to love the aspects that set our region apart from more urbanised areas, such as our clean air, open landscapes, agricultural industry and sense of community, which all provide a safe environment for families and individuals to live and grow within.

The proposed Energy-from-Waste facility puts all these factors that make our community great at risk, and this is not something that I can stand for. I am extremely concerned about the health risks that the proposed waste incinerator would bring to the people of Parkes and the damage that would be caused to families and individuals throughout the community.

It is known that Energy-from-Waste facilities release dioxins and other toxic pollutants that build up over time in the environment and even our food chain. These toxic pollutants have been linked to serious health problems, including cancer, respiratory problems and birth defects. Any proposed infrastructure that poses health concerns such as these should not be allowed to be built anywhere within proximity of human habitation.

In a small country town like Parkes, it is impossible to separate the health of our people from the health of our land, where homes, schools, and farms are all connected. Once pollutants contaminate our air, soil and water, it cannot be undone, and it is in no way fair to put the future of our community at risk over the non-renewable burning of waste that does not even belong to us. We should not have to suffer the consequences of Sydney's mismanagement of its waste.

Calling the proposed Energy-from-Waste facility 'green energy' is extremely misleading and an improper use of the term. Burning waste, especially plastics, releases carbon dioxide and other harmful gases. It is not a renewable source of energy and instead encourages the creation of more waste as these facilities require a constant supply of rubbish to burn. Shipping tons of waste all the way out here to Parkes in Regional NSW is only moving Sydney's waste problem elsewhere, rather than focusing on fixing the waste management system and reducing waste at the source. It is not fair to put pressure on regional communities with smaller numbers and fewer voices to be responsible for waste that does not belong to us, and compromises the health of our communities and of future generations to come.

Instead of building a waste incinerator in Parkes, the government should be focusing on solving Sydney's waste problem and finding better, more sustainable and truly green solutions. Implementing better restrictions on packaging and single-use plastics and introducing legislation that holds companies that produce single-use plastic waste accountable for dealing with it at their expense, prompting green packaging innovation and development should be implemented.

I want Parkes to be known for its clean industries, renewable energy and innovation, not as the place that Sydney sends its rubbish to be burnt.

I am proud to call Parkes home and want to see it grow in ways that protect our health, our land and our future. I strongly urge that the proposed Energy-from-Waste facility be rejected and that real sustainable solutions for Sydney's red-bin waste problem be implemented.

Sincerely,

Libby Pepper