

**Submission
No 815**

INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE FACILITIES

Name: Mrs Brooke Thornton

Date Received: 30 October 2025

My name is Brooke Thornton, and I am a long-term resident of Parkes, I am a mother of three children with another on the way, and my family's wellbeing is at the heart of this submission.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Energy from Waste (EFW) facility in Regional NSW. Like many families in our community, I am deeply concerned about the potential environmental, health, and agricultural impacts this project may have not only now, but for generations to come.

Parkes is a proud regional town built on farming, family, and community. The people here have worked hard to make this a safe and healthy place to raise children. I cannot stand by silently as decisions are made that could jeopardise that.

Below I will list just a few of my concerns with this proposed project:

Water Consumption and Drought Impact-

Our region is prone to drought, and water is already one of our most precious resources. Agriculture, livestock, and daily life depend on it. Where will the water come from? How will it affect farmers, households, and local supply?

Food Production and Agricultural Land -

Parkes and surrounding areas are known for producing food for Australia and the world. Constructing a facility that emits pollutants on or near prime agricultural land puts that reputation and our livelihood at risk. Even small amounts of contamination could taint crops, water, or livestock, leading to health impacts and economic losses. This directly conflicts with the national interest of protecting Australia's food security.

Health and Emission Risks -

There is growing evidence from overseas that emissions from waste-to-energy incinerators can contain dioxins, heavy metals, and fine particulate matter. If those pollutants enter our air, soil, or water, the long-term health consequences could be severe especially for children and pregnant women. With no current baseline testing or continuous 24/7 monitoring planned, there is no way to ensure that local residents won't be exposed to harmful toxins.

Monitoring should be independent, transparent, and constant. Communities deserve to know what is being released into their environment every hour, not just during occasional testing.

Location and Fairness to Regional NSW

It is deeply unfair that Sydney's waste is being sent hundreds of kilometres away to regional towns like Parkes. The stated reason for the incinerator is to manage Sydney's red-bin waste, but the risks and burdens are being placed on rural families and farmland.

If this project poses no risk, then it should remain near the city that produces the waste.

Community and Environmental Concerns -

The Parkes community has not been adequately consulted. Many residents were unaware of the proposal until it was already underway. This lack of transparency breaks trust and gives the impression that economic interests are being prioritised over public welfare.

If the EFW project proceeds, and in future there are increases in cancer rates, land contamination, who will be held accountable? The local people will bear the cost not the contractors or foreign corporations profiting from the project.

In conclusion, I strongly urge the Committee to reject the proposed Energy from Waste incinerator in Parkes.

The potential risks to water, food production, and community health are too great to justify. Parkes has been chosen not because it is suitable, but because it is remote and politically convenient. Our families, farms, and futures should not be treated as an afterthought to Sydney's waste problem.

If this project moves ahead, the government will lose the confidence and trust of local communities who feel unheard and unprotected. For the sake of my children and all regional families I ask that you put people before profit and safeguard the wellbeing of our land, water, and health for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Brooke Thornton

Parkes, NSW

Mother of three (soon to be four)