

Submission
No 823

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE
FACILITIES**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 27 October 2025

Partially
Confidential

The Hon. Nichole Overall, MLC
Chair
Select Committee on Proposed Energy from Waste Facilities
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000
Contact: wasteenergy@parliament.nsw.gov.au
27 October 2025

To whom it may concern,

RE: ENQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE FACILITIES

The incineration or thermal treatment of solid waste is HARMFUL to human health, the environment and contaminates our food chain no matter what incineration technology is used. Given this, I strongly object to the burning or thermal treatment of waste at any location near where humans live in NSW for the following reasons:

1) The justification for the approval of the technologies proposed for the Tarago and Parkeswaste incinerators is based on the updated NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer's report which maintains that "modern" waste incinerators are safe and widely used in Europe.

This report is flawed because:

- a. It only reviews options FOR the incineration of waste and does not provide a balanced review of the alternatives. Nor does it mention the health and environmental issues associated with waste incinerators being found in the UK and the EU and
- b. The independent reviewers have a potential conflict of interest.

2) The spread of aerial emissions and exposure to ash and other residues created by waste incinerators will have harmful, long-term impacts on human health, the environment and contaminate the food chain.

3) The position maintained by the NSW EPA and Government that the burning, pyrolysis or gasification of residual waste is part of a Circular Economy is false.

4) The creation of a true Circular Economy is a viable alternative that will greatly reduce the amount of solid waste being sent to landfill and remove the need for ANY waste incineration.

5) The immediate adoption of biopolymers to replace fossil-fuel based plastics, will remove the need to incinerate the large quantities of soft plastic packaging currently generated.

1) The performance of so-called best available waste incinerator technologies

The justification for adopting the incineration of waste as the only viable solution to the Greater Sydney waste crisis is a review carried out by staff from the University of Sydney.¹

This report cannot be relied on for the following reasons:

a) Possible Conflicts of Interest

The Waste Transformation Research Hub at The University of Sydney is partnered and have received funding from a range of fossil fuel and waste management companies including Toxfree (wholly owned by Cleanaway – a major operator of waste incinerators around the world and Delta Electricity (operator of NSW coal-powered electricity generators).

This calls into question whether this review is independent of any influence from power generation, energy from waste or waste management companies who have a vested interest in promoting the incineration of waste rather than creating a true Circular Economy to recover and reuse materials from the current waste stream.

The report's authors are chemical engineers in the School of Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering. Their expertise is in "Process Systems Engineering", often focused on improving incineration processes, including coal powered electricity.² They do not appear to have any expertise in health or the disposal of hazardous waste.

b) Failure to Evaluate all Viable Options

The review is incomplete because it has failed to evaluate a number of alternative opportunities for the management of NSW's waste. Instead, it has considered only one option to reduce the amount of material going to landfill – the mass incineration of dry waste. A complete, independent and unbiased review would have evaluated a thorough cost-benefit analysis of the existing and various other options for the disposal of Sydney's waste.

As a start, such a review would need to cover the following options as minimum:

i. Continue disposal of waste to landfill

For this option the study would need to consider two cases

- Business As Usual - do nothing and continue to landfill all waste as is or
- Continue to landfill, but with all food and green organics removed from the waste stream and composted. This would achieve a minimum 40% reduction in the quantity

of material going to landfill and extend the life of the existing landfills.

The estimated costs for each case would need to be based on the availability of potential landfill sites and how long these could be expected to last, and projected transport costs.

Kind regards