

Submission
No 863

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE
FACILITIES**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 26 October 2025

Partially
Confidential

29 October 26, 2025

My name is [redacted] I was born and raised in Parkes and while I have lived in other places (Carins, Canberra, NSW Central Coast) over the years, I always found my way back to the only place that feels like home to me, Parkes. I wish to make a submission of my concerns about the energy from waste (EfW) facility/incinerator proposed for my home town of Parkes.

I have many concerns about the consequences of an EfW facility being built in Parkes – my first and most extreme concern is to the health and well being of the residents of Parkes and the surrounding areas. The pollutants that will result from EfW, some of them being forever chemicals, are known to cause health problems such as asthma, cancers and birth defects. We have seen this in other countries where they are, or were in use (some are being decommissioned on health grounds).

I am also concerned about the mental health toll of this development. I have suffered from increased stress and fear and I have seen this in my family and work mates also. In fact, I don't know anyone who isn't opposed to this development.

My second main concern is the effect it will have on the agriculture industry in the region. The plume plotter has shown that the toxins will be carried up to 200km on a windy day – this will have a big impact over time. If stock or crops are found to be contaminated, they cannot be sold and certainly cannot be exported. This will result in food supply issues in NSW and Australia and a loss of export revenue.

If this facility is built it will contaminate the water supply and household rain water tanks. It will contaminate household vegetable gardens, chickens/eggs, pets drinking water, local parks etc.

I am concerned about the impact this will have on my town, many people I know are discussing leaving if this thing goes ahead. I am extremely disappointed and angry with Parkes Shire Council about the lack of transparency about this development – originally calling it a recycling centre. I don't believe Council has met the minimum consultation requirements.

I find it galling that the EPA has deemed EfW to not be safe in NSW, yet are ok for facilities to be built in a handful of regional locations. Why are we considered less than people living in cities and other areas of NSW? Why are our lives less valuable? And why is regional NSW responsible for dealing with Sydney's waste? If it's not safe for Sydney, it's not safe for Parkes.

Most of us living in regional areas are here for the quality of life. We sacrifice things like easy access to quality health care and proximity to beaches etc because we love our communities and easy lifestyle and value the health benefits, especially the fresh air.

As I understand it, no one will be sorting the red bin waste, so who knows what will end up in the incinerator. Is it wise to put it on trains and transport it several hundred kilometres to be incinerated in a very 'un-green' way? At this stage we have not been advised of the plan for dealing with the highly toxic fly ash and bottom ash.

There is nothing green or environmentally friendly about an EfW incinerator. The energy produced is not a lot and for the Parkes proposal it will be used to power other businesses (some "hard to place" business who will add to the toxic load. Some people in town have been misled into believing that they will end up with cheaper electricity. This is concerning as it is incorrect and I can see no actual benefit to our town of having this development go ahead. The handful of jobs promised – overstated and no guarantee they will employ locals – are not worth the risks.

Sadly, I have little confidence in the EPA to make the right call and safeguard the people of Parkes. I have been told that the EPA has reduced emissions standards at the Parkes Special Activation Precinct (SAP) to allow for the incinerator and other “hard to place” industry. I feel successive NSW governments have dropped the ball on the issue of Sydney’s waste management and are prepared to do whatever it takes to get the problem out of Sydney, regardless of the harms it will cause in the regions. There certainly is a feeling in town that our lives are valued way less than those of people who live in metro areas. It’s hard to argue otherwise, given what they are trying to push through, ignoring their own standards.

I am concerned about how the emissions would be monitored – about the method and frequency. Having the proponent in charge of the testing is like leaving the fox in charge of the hen house. Several of us will be having our land tested before this thing is operational (assuming it goes ahead).

The proponent being from the Middle East also does little to ease my concerns. Who will pay compensation once rates of contamination and illness increase? Who do we sue?

From what I have heard, in other countries where incinerators have been operating, it has reduced recycling and contaminated surrounding areas. Regardless of the spin the proponent has put on this, there is nothing green or circular about burning rubbish. There are other ways of reducing waste that should be considered well ahead of EfW, assuming the government actually cares about the environment.

I hope that this, and all of the other submissions, will be given serious consideration.