

Submission
No 867

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE
FACILITIES**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 27 October 2025

Partially
Confidential

I am a long-term resident of regional New South Wales, having raised my family in the country for the clean, simple lifestyle it offers. Our choice to live here was driven by the promise of fresh air, safe water, and a healthy environment, values that are now under threat from the proposed Waste-to-Energy (WtE) facility in Parkes. This impending pollutant to our clean living is of great concern causing much anxiety and stress about what the future could hold for this community and the unknown effects of the long term impacts on the environment and the health of the people living in close proximity.

I am strongly opposed to WTE and am addressing terms of reference b and d.

(b) Emissions Spread and Quality

The Stockholm Convention advises WTE incineration is classified as a prime source of persistent organic pollutants such as Dioxin. These pollutants are so damaging because of their toxicity, persistence and bio-accumulation, ultimately concentrating in the polar ice caps. There is no 'safe' level of exposure.

The Minamata Convention highlights mercury emissions as a critical concern. Incinerators, even modern ones, release mercury and other heavy metals into the atmosphere, contaminating air, soil, and water. Basel guidelines further warn that hazardous residues such as fly ash must be managed under strict controls to prevent leaching into ecosystems. These emissions can travel far beyond the facility boundaries, impacting regional communities and agricultural land.

(d) Human Health and Water Safety

Both Stockholm and Minamata stress the need to protect human health from toxic exposure. POPs and mercury can infiltrate drinking water sources, rainwater tanks, and soils, posing long-term risks to neurological health, reproductive systems, and food safety. Basel's emphasis on environmentally sound management underscores that incineration creates secondary waste streams that threaten water quality and soil integrity.

In light of these conventions, WtE incineration is incompatible with Australia's commitments to safeguard health and the environment. Alternative strategies, such as robust recycling systems and circular economy initiatives must be prioritized over technologies that perpetuate pollution.

Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs):

<http://pops.int>

Minamata Convention on Mercury:

<https://minamataconvention.org/en>

Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal: <https://www.basel.int>

Alternative Solutions

Rather than taking a short-term approach, government should invest in strategies that align with a circular economy. This includes expanding advanced recycling infrastructure, enforcing producer responsibility for single-use plastics, and incentivizing composting and anaerobic digestion for organic waste. These methods reduce residual waste without generating toxic emissions or hazardous ash. By prioritizing innovation and sustainable practices, Australia can meet its waste challenges without compromising health, agriculture, or environmental integrity.

Thank you for taking the time to read my submission opposing WTE as a solution for waste management in Australia.