

Submission  
No 885

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE  
FACILITIES**

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 29 October 2025

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Partially  
Confidential

This submission is provided to the Parliament Inquiry into the proposed Energy to Waste facilities in Regional NSW.

I respond to the terms of reference (b) the spread of the emissions predicted and the quality of emissions to be generated, (d) impacts on human health including on regional town drinking water, rainwater harvesting and soil contamination, (e) the impact on agriculture locally and across the wider region, (f) alterations to the Parkes Special Activation Precinct specifically in relation to the proposed Energy Recovery Facility in that region and, (h) the methodology of emission monitoring employed by leading large scale waste-to-energy facilities in Australia and across the world

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ I am 52 years old, was born in Parkes NSW and reside in Parkes NSW. I am a third generation Parkes resident who has enjoyed every minute growing up in a rural community with my grandparents and parents and had the honour of raising my child here in Parkes. I wish to be able to have my grandchildren visit or be raised in Parkes also.

I attended Parkes High School, studied Secondary Teaching at Charles Sturt University Bathurst and returned to teach in my hometown, at Parkes High School and have been employed there for 35 years. I have been an active member in my rural community in a safe healthy environment. I work with young children every day. I worry about the long-term impact this facility will have on their health and development.

I wish to express that I am totally against the Waste for Energy Waste facility in Parkes.

There was a total Lack of transparency for residents in Parkes by the former Mayor and Councillors, the Parkes Precinct was presented to residents as a logistics hub for transport, never an incinerator for the waste of Sydney. It was announced to residents in 2025 while planning had started in 2019. Due course to inform residents of potential health concerns and have the chance to speak on the proposal was never given.

The following are my concerns re the Waste to Energy Incinerator in Parkes

- Countries turning away from waste incineration due to long term health issues – they are decommissioning old incinerator and NOT building new ones.
- Lack of long term studies re the technology of the incinerator and what are SAFE levels of air pollution released by the incinerator - Any toxins produced by burning plastics and other materials will have a negative impact on the community, no matter what the level. Is the health of a rural community worth gambling on for the sake of a city problem.
- The Proximity of the plant to residents of Parkes. One of our schools is located within km of the incinerator. The entire population of Parkes and surrounding

villages is in the fallout of toxins produced by the incinerator. The town of Forbes is only 28km away also.

- Emissions of dioxins and furans into the air and continued residue in drinking water, soil, produce and livestock. The Incinerator company acknowledged that over time levels in soil and drinking water will accumulate.
- We can not control what rubbish is sent to Parkes from Sydney, like batteries.
- Short term and long term issues for the Parkes and surrounding farming community. We are a long time farming community priding itself on producing some of the best quality crops and produce, a lot of which supplies the Sydney area. The incinerator emissions puts this quality in direct jeopardy. Produce and stock prices will fall, if not be banned, and land value will be reduced – this will result from a real or PERCEIVED issue. Will farming in the Parkes area meet the strict guidelines for production, some of which are the most strict in the world for safety consumption.
- Where is the water that is needed to assist the incineration process coming from. For parts of the year and for many years our town has been in drought with our council enforcing water restrictions.
- Long term health issues for the residents of Parkes and surrounding communities. The incinerator company had stated that they will burn a certain amount of waste per year, but the plant has the capacity to burn a lot more, who would regulate this, and if this to happen there would be more toxins emitted.
- Regulation of air levels and quality – The fact that the incinerator company themselves are responsible for collecting this data worries me. There is no guarantee it will be accurate. There has been no thorough baseline measures taken re our air quality and soil levels as yet. How can there be any transparent testing in the future that compares results to keep our residents safe.
- The amount of mis information or lack there of, by the company around issues is a real problem. Saying it is safe ???? the incinerator emits dioxins and furans. Saying the plant will provide electricity to residents ??? The energy produced by this plant is of a very modest scale and will not be accessible to the residents of Parkes, it will only be available to the industry based precinct. Saying it is a renewable energy initiative???? This incinerator is not a renewable or circular energy process as stated by ministers in parliament, this process burns waste, emits toxins and leaves toxic ash that is needed to be disposed of.
- Regulation of Incinerator company by the EPA – recent information about the town of Broken Hill and its residents makes it very hard to have guarantee that the government will have the best interests for the health of the Parkes residents.
- The EPA cannot guarantee 100% that the waste to energy incinerator will not harm the residents of Parkes
- Essential workers, teachers, doctors, nurses, paramedics, police, child care workers, age care workers, have already indicated they will leave Parkes if the

incinerator goes ahead. Many of these professions have a real shortage already in our town, how will we attract other educated professionals to live in a town where their and their families / children will be exposed to toxins.

- I am worried if families leave Parkes and if families do not come to live in Parkes due to the incinerator, that our schools and opportunities for our youth will suffer. When student numbers drop in school their resources and funding are directly affected – children education in Parkes should not suffer or be effected by a government endorsed plan to try and fix Sydney’s rubbish problem
- Tourism has been a major investment for the Parkes community. The introduction of an incinerator and its emissions will severely hinder our tourism. Educated people would not come for a holiday or any period of time if there was a real or perceived chance of harming ones health, families would not bring their children to breathe in any level of toxins.
- Financial remuneration – who will be responsible for financial remuneration if and when in the future there are health problems, when locals lose money re house value pricing, when farmers lose productivity for crops and livestock, when farmers have a decrease in the value of multi-generational farms, ALL these people should have the right to litigate.
- Devaluing of Housing prices- I am not very far away from retiring and when my house, which we have worked extremely hard for over many years, devalues, I will not be able to relocate due to not being able to afford / or be eligible for a housing loan in a different town.
- Mental health of rural residents – the fact that many residents will not be in a situation where they can relocate will have a severe negative impact on mental health – never knowing if the toxins being released into the air is harmful, never really knowing if the water we drink is harmful, never knowing if the vegetables grown in your backyard are harmful. Living with increase anxiety due to animosity in the town. Farmers losing their impeccable reputation of quality of stock, it worries me that depression, self harm, substance abuse and suicide could eventuate due to the waste to energy incinerator.
- Other rural communities should be very worried that this will become the norm.

Parkes was up until recently, a cohesive and friendly community, it is now divided and at times hostile due a problem that was never the residents of Parkes.

I chose to live here for it’s friendly way of life, but now living here causes stress and anxiety, why should a government problem fall on residents who live 100’s kms away, why should the residents be exposed to toxins and decreasing house values. Parkes residents have chosen a cleaner way of living, sometimes at the detriment of lack resources and facilities, but we chose this over a life in the city with high pollution.

Ms Penny Sharpe, Minister for Energy, stood and addressed parliament expressing her concern about waste to energy incinerators, then fought and won, not to have a waste to energy incinerator in her electorate, stating that the toxic pollution would be harmful to her constituents. Mr Chris Bowen, Minister for Climate Change and Energy, also fought and won not to have a waste to energy incinerator in his electorate ... how can the incinerator be harmful for city residents, but not harmful for rural residents. This is clearly inequity for the health of rural NSW residents while also displaying a total lack of empathy by the Federal and State government for the health of its citizens – saying no for urban residents and yes to rural residents is abhorrent. Why are there now regulations that prohibit the building of waste to energy incinerators in some area, like Sydney, and not in Parkes?

Many Parkes residents are of the opinion that the Government just does not care about us, they have indicated that they would just be wasting their time to write a submission into this inquiry, that rural people are being treated less than those who live in the cities, that rural communities can be sacrificed.

#### Alternatives

Travelling through far west NSW, SA, QLD and NT there is much land that is not in close proximity to hard working residents, that have the human right to live a safe healthy life – one suggestion would be to have the state government commit to building infrastructure in a remote area to cope with the problem of Sydney waste.

The residents of Sydney could be held more accountable for their waste, monitored waste reduction, reuse and recycling initiatives.

#### Investigation of Cold Waste technologies

My family chose to live in the country, not to live in a city, to live far from the pollution, to live a cleaner lifestyle. We have worked hard and built a life here, and the implementation of the Energy to Waste incinerator jeopardizes the essence of living in the country for all Parkes residents. I do not want to have to move from Parkes.

Please reject this proposal and protect the health and future of our regions, please be our voice.

29/10/2025