

Submission
No 887

**INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE
FACILITIES**

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 29 October 2025

Partially
Confidential

Submission Against the Parkes Energy Recovery (EfW) Incinerator Project

By:

Resident of Parkes, NSW

Age: 27

Occupation: Laboratory Technician (in training)

I, _____, would like to formally object to the proposed Parkes Energy Recovery Facility.

My partner and I recently moved back to Parkes from Newcastle. Had we known that an incinerator was being proposed for this area, we would have seriously reconsidered moving here and investing in our future. I am 27 years old and currently work as a **lab technician in training**, specialising in **soil testing**. Having grown up on a farm until I was 16 years old and later returning to Parkes, I have a deep respect for the work our farmers do and understand how critical healthy soil, water, and air are to our region.

This project raises serious concerns for me both personally and professionally. I work with soils and environmental samples every day, and the thought of **potentially pulling out contaminated soil containing “forever chemicals” (PFAS and other toxins)** from emissions or ash waste is deeply worrying. These contaminants can persist for decades and enter food chains through crops, livestock, and water systems.

On a personal level, I am extremely concerned about the **health impacts** this incinerator could bring. I have been diagnosed with **health anxiety**, and the constant worry about invisible pollutants, possible exposure to toxins, and long-term effects on fertility and pregnancy would cause immense stress. As someone who hopes to start a family in the future, I fear what this facility could mean for the health of future pregnancies could the fumes or chemicals increase the risk of miscarriage, birth defects, or developmental issues in children?

My father has battled non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma twice and now lives with ongoing immune system complications. I fear the effects this facility’s emissions could have on people like him those who are already immunocompromised and vulnerable. Why should the health of regional communities like ours be considered less important than the health of people in Sydney?

If this facility goes ahead, I would be forced to consider leaving Parkes. However, the presence of an incinerator may make selling our home very difficult, trapping us in a situation we never chose.

Questions for the Proponent and Decision Makers

1. What **independent testing** will be done on air, soil, and water to monitor for toxins such as dioxins, PFAS (“forever chemicals”), and heavy metals?
2. How will these results be shared publicly, and how often will they be updated?

3. What are the known reproductive health risks associated with exposure to emissions from similar facilities, and have these been studied in comparable rural environments?
4. What safeguards are in place to protect farmers, soil technicians, and others working directly with the land from exposure to contaminants?
5. If contamination is detected, what remediation processes and compensation plans will be provided for affected landholders and workers?
6. How will this project ensure that emissions remain within safe limits and who will be held accountable if they do not?
7. What mental health support will be available for residents who experience anxiety or distress related to this facility?
8. Has there been an assessment of how this incinerator could affect **property values, housing stability, and population retention** in Parkes?

Recommendations

- The **Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** should not proceed until **independent, peer-reviewed health impact assessments** specific to the Parkes community are completed.
- A **transparent monitoring program** should be established before any construction begins, including **baseline testing** for air, soil, and water quality, with public reporting every quarter.
- The NSW Government should **prioritise regional health and environmental safety** to the same standard as metropolitan areas.
- A **community oversight committee** including local scientists, healthcare workers, and residents should be formed to review testing data and hold the company accountable.
- Alternative, **sustainable waste management options** (such as recycling and composting infrastructure) should be explored before resorting to incineration.

Conclusion

This proposal poses unacceptable risks to our **health, environment, and future**. As a young professional trying to build a life and career in Parkes, I feel deeply disheartened that this kind of industrial development is being considered so close to where we live, work, and hope to raise families.

I strongly urge the NSW Government and relevant authorities to **pause this project**, fully investigate the health and environmental impacts, and listen to the voices of local residents who will be directly affected.

Sincerely,

Parkes, NSW