

**Submission
No 988**

INQUIRY INTO PROPOSED ENERGY FROM WASTE FACILITIES

Name: Mr Karl Turner
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Submission to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Proposed Energy-from-Waste Facilities in Regional NSW
(Inquiry No. 3128)

Submitted by: Karl Turner

Location: Trundle, Parkes Region, NSW

Date: October 2025

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Cover Statement

To the Members of the Committee,

My name is Karl Turner, and I am a farmer, wool classer, father of two young daughters, and President of the Trundle Pastoral and Agricultural Show Society.

I also serve as the Trundle SES Commander, and I am proud to be part of a family that has farmed the same land in the Parkes Shire for over 100 years.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Energy-from-Waste (EfW) incinerator near Parkes, NSW.

This proposal threatens not only the environmental integrity of our district, but also the health and wellbeing of our families, the quality of our produce, and the legacy of sustainable land management passed down through generations.

My late grandfather, Cr Ken Turner OAM, was a councillor and Goobang President during the 1960s. He championed regenerative farming, soil conservation, and water retention practices that are still visible across our farm today — contour banks, tree planting, and soil restoration methods that continue to protect the land.

This incinerator proposal undermines everything he, and countless others, worked to preserve.

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Soil Health and Agricultural Integrity

The Parkes Shire's greatest resource is its soil — the foundation of every farm, crop, and community within it.

The introduction of an EfW facility puts that at risk.

Airborne toxins, heavy metals, and fine particulates will not simply disappear; they settle on soil, pasture, and water, ultimately entering the food chain.

As a wool classer and livestock producer, the purity of our environment is critical to maintaining animal health, fleece quality, and industry trust.

Any contamination — even the perception of it — would devastate market access for local producers and tarnish the reputation of Parkes Shire’s clean, regenerative agriculture.

Once toxins like dioxins, mercury, or PFAS compounds enter the ecosystem, they accumulate within soils, crops, and animal tissue — degrading the very resource we rely upon for livelihood and food security.

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Air Quality and Health Concerns

I live with asthma, and I know firsthand how even minor changes in air quality can affect daily life.

An EfW incinerator will increase the release of ultrafine particulate matter, which cannot be fully captured by existing filtration systems. These particles penetrate deep into the lungs and bloodstream, posing long-term risks to people with respiratory conditions, the elderly, and young children.

Our region already faces challenges with dust and dry air; introducing an additional source of airborne pollutants would worsen local health outcomes and place further strain on families and medical services in small rural towns like Trundle.

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Intergenerational Impact and Community Stability

Our family has farmed this land for more than a century, continually adapting and regenerating it for the next generation.

The thought of my daughters growing up in an area where air, soil, and water are compromised by industrial toxins is deeply distressing.

If contamination were to occur, it would erode both the land’s productivity and our community’s confidence in its future — driving families away, reducing investment, and weakening the social fabric that defines rural life.

As President of the Trundle Show Society and SES Commander, I see every day the value of community spirit and cooperation.

We cannot sustain that spirit if decisions are made that put our health and livelihoods at risk.

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Better Pathways Forward

We do not need to burn waste to manage it.

Regional NSW has the potential to lead the state in sustainable resource recovery, recycling, and biological waste processing that create local jobs and protect rural environments.

I strongly support:

- A phase-out of single-use plastics and non-recyclable materials at the manufacturing stage,
- Greater incentives for on-farm composting and recycling infrastructure, and
- A ban on metropolitan waste disposal in rural regions where environmental monitoring and emergency response capacities are limited.

Protecting rural areas from waste dumping is not anti-progress — it is common sense and the only way to ensure true circular economy outcomes.

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Conclusion

This submission is written with both urgency and hope.

Urgency — because the health of our land and people is at immediate risk.

Hope — because I believe our voices still matter, and that the Committee will listen to those who have lived, worked, and cared for this land for generations.

The Energy-from-Waste incinerator near Parkes does not align with the values or future vision of our community.

It threatens our soil, air, water, produce quality, and ultimately, the health of our children.

I urge the Committee to reject this project and instead invest in genuine, regional waste reduction and recycling solutions that protect both people and place.

Sincerely,

Karl Turner

Farmer | Wool Classer | Trundle SES Commander | Father | President, Trundle Show Society

Parkes Region, NSW

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References and Supporting Research

1. World Health Organization (WHO) – Health Effects of Waste Incineration: A Systematic Review (2019).
2. European Environment Agency (EEA) – Air Quality in Europe Report (2022).
3. United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) – Dioxins and Furans Toolkit (2021).
4. Australian Department of Health – Toxicological Review of Dioxins and Their Impact on Human Health (2020).
5. The Lancet Planetary Health – Prenatal and Childhood Exposure to Air Pollutants and Neurodevelopmental Outcomes (2021).
6. ANU National Centre for Epidemiology – Health and Environmental Impacts of Waste-to-Energy Facilities in Australia (2023).
7. Public Health England – Review of Epidemiological Evidence of Health Effects from Incineration (2014).