

To whom it may concern,

My name is Tegan Taylor, of 3 Bate Place, Bank ACT 2906. I strongly object to Veolia's proposed incinerator being built in Tarago.

Tarago is a beautiful rural town and the building of this incinerator will destroy it. The health and safety of the townspeople should be the top priority when taking this build into consideration and it is evidently not at this point. Veolia's incinerator proposal will emit toxic air pollution 24 hours a day, 365 days a year for 25 years, which will spread throughout the region from Canberra to Goulburn, Braidwood, Bungendore, Murrumbateman, Gunning, Marulan, Yass and so many more regions.

Pollution from the proposed incinerator will include acid gases, toxic heavy metal particulates (mercury, lead, cadmium) and persistent organic particulates (dioxins, furans, PCBs, PFAS). Particulate pollution can lead to decreased lung function, cardiac disease and death. In addition to polluting the air, dioxins and furans will accumulate in the surrounding environment over time in soil and water and are absorbed by plants, crops and animals. Food contaminated by incinerator toxins can cause cancer, miscarriage, infant deaths, developmental delays, reproductive issues, heart disease and respiratory impairment.

The proposal will create 2.2 million tonnes of toxic waste ash, including 380,000 tonnes of air pollution control residue (fly ash) which is classified as hazardous waste by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). All of this will be dumped on site, risking further contamination of soil and groundwater as well as the Sydney water catchment. Veolia's track record of polluting local groundwaters (recognised by EPA prevention notice in October 2022) proves they cannot be trusted to safely manage such toxic outputs.

This incinerator will impact the health of our children, grandchildren and their grandchildren through the accumulation of forever chemicals in the surrounding environment. It is an intergenerational burden and legacy which cannot be allowed to go ahead. The NSW Government acknowledges in its own Energy from Waste Infrastructure Plan that waste incinerators impact human health stating "Populations can still experience health impacts when emissions are below the national standards, and for some common air pollutants, there is no safe threshold of impact".

In 2019, academics from the Australian National University Medical School, the Public Health Association of Australia, and Council of Academic Public Health Institutions Australia completed a systematic review of the health impacts of waste incineration, which was published in the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health in 2020 and referenced by the NSW Government Chief Scientist and Engineer in his report to the NSW Minister for Environment that same year. This report concluded that "there is insufficient evidence to conclude that any incinerator is safe" and in particular "contamination of food and ingestion of pollutants is a significant risk pathway for both nearby and distant residents".

The proposal has already caused significant detrimental negative impact to surrounding communities' mental health by increasing anxiety and depression. This will only be increased if the project goes ahead as those living nearby continue to stress about when their health will start to show the impacts of the pollution from the facility, or having to stay indoors. The proposed incinerator will exceed NSW government safety standards for air emissions during start-up, shut-down and many other 'non-standard' operating conditions. Veolia's overseas incinerators often exceed safety standards and Veolia has a track record locally for failing to comply with license conditions at their existing Woodlawn facility.

I have not made any reportable political donations in the last two years. By sending this email I acknowledge and accept the Department's disclaimer and declaration.

Warm regards

Tegan Taylor

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