



Zero Waste Australia

Media Statement

24th November 2023

Damning new evidence of under-reported incinerator pollution in France.

A lesson for Australian environmental regulators.

Following revelations by French Health authorities this week confirming that large parts of Paris are contaminated with Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), including Dioxin, our colleagues in France - Collectif 3R and Toxicowatch, have [warned](#) that up to 7000 hours of incineration emissions went unmonitored over 2 years, resulting in food chain contamination and a ban on eating home produced eggs. The recommendation applies to the entire population of the 410 municipalities concerned.

Paris residents and [Collectif 3R](#) have long complained to authorities that the Sycatom incinerator (the largest in Paris) has been affecting the surrounding community and failing to comply fully with their operational license.

“French health authorities have yet to release their report, however serious questions must be raised as to why civil society groups such as Collectif 3R and independent scientists at [Toxicowatch](#), were forced to do the job of the regulators to prove the excessive pollution emissions and non-compliant operations of one of the most highly promoted waste incinerators in France.” States Jane Bremmer Coordinator Zero Waste Australia.

“The seriousness of the contamination identified by [French authorities](#) - Persistent Organic Pollutants - which included Dioxin, PCB's and some PFAS - leaves many local communities as victims of environmental injustice and toxic exposure. This follows closely revelations that much of the city of [Lausanne, Switzerland](#) also has serious dioxin contamination associated with their waste incinerator resulting in similar health advisories on growing and consuming eggs and vegetables in the region. French authorities have now [warned](#) the public not to eat eggs from domestic henhouses from the Paris metropolitan area.”

“Australia is currently facing a major waste incinerator industry push to establish these these polluting technologies as “the missing link” in Australia's waste management system. The Australian government needs to intervene immediately to place a moratorium on all approvals for waste to energy incinerator projects as this industry is incapable of coming clean on its real emissions and the threat they present to human health and our food supplies. We should learn from the contamination disasters in France and Switzerland.”

“With communities in many regional food growing regions in [NSW](#), [Victoria](#) and [Queensland](#), facing large-scale waste to energy incinerator projects, a precautionary approach is urgently needed so as to avoid widespread contamination of the environment and food chain. Urgent action must also be taken now to reassess the [two largescale incinerators](#) being built close to residents in Western Australia.”

“Australia already has a major [PFAS contamination problem](#). It would be indefensible for Australian state governments to proceed with the roll out of this industry while such damning evidence exists about the real pollution levels emitted by incinerators. [Recent studies](#) have shown that PFAS is not destroyed by incinerators but released via stack emissions and in the associated toxic ash.”, warns Jane Bremmer Zero Waste Australia.

For more information –

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