

WASTE INCINERATION: POLLUTING, TOXIC AND WASTEFUL

NO FIX TO OUR WASTE CRISIS.

Dear Premier and Councillors,

We, the undersigned, call for an urgent moratorium on any approvals, subsidies and support for all types of waste-to-energy incinerators, which includes those using mass combustion, gasification, pyrolysis technologies and cogeneration projects with the coal, paper and cement industry sectors. We note there are a number of large proposals being fast-tracked without full environmental and human health impact assessment, and that assessment of their impact on recycling now and in the future has been grossly inadequate.

Waste-to-energy incinerators are more polluting than coal and gas-fired power stations for energy output, they generate tens of thousands of tonnes of hazardous waste in the form of ash each and every year, and threaten to undermine our transition to a circular economy by locking in local councils to long-term contracts with the same unsustainable linear model of resource extraction, production, single use, waste generation and disposal that has failed us for decades.

We reject the claim that waste incineration is part of a circular economy and note our view is supported by the European Union. A significant portion of material found in the red bin is recyclable or compostable and should not be burnt.

It's time to overhaul our waste system in Victoria and urgently invest in the transition to zero waste and a true circular economy. The situation our waterways and marine life face is perilous. An ocean animal is killed by plastic

pollution every thirty seconds and at least 8 million tonnes of plastics end up in the ocean each year. We must act now to begin to reverse this critical situation!

We need to act in line with the expectations of the people of Victoria and with the full engagement and inclusion of the community.

We demand urgent action to implement zero waste and circular economy policies in Victoria including:

- Dedicated source separation and collection of food and garden organics, paper and cardboard, glass, metals, and plastics across the state to generate clean recyclable waste streams to support the recycling industry and reduce climate pollution
- Introduction of a drink container refund scheme to help reduce litter, clean up our recycling and increase recycling levels that will deliver more clean recycle than kerbside operations alone
- Phasing out of unnecessary single-use plastics, starting with straws, stirrers, cotton tips, balloon sticks and polystyrene containers and cups
- Investment in the local recycling industry to process recycling safely and effectively
- Introduction of targets for the use of clean recycled materials and products in infrastructure and packaging
- Improved packaging so that it is truly reusable, recyclable or compostable