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From: Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 8 May 2019 9:57 AM
To: recyclinginquiry
Subject: New Submission to Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management

Inquiry Name: Inquiry into Recycling and Waste Management

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SUBMISSION CONTENT:

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Melbourne's western suburbs have long borne the brunt of industrial pollution. Stony Creek, which lies not much more than a stone's throw from my house, has been treated as an industrial drain. The concrete lining between Francis Street and Williamstown Road even makes it look like it is intended to be a drain! Yarraville was also the site of a number of chemical factories which polluted the ground with arsenic and other toxic substances. (Eventually, these sites were cleaned up, at public expense.) We also have the greatest volume of through truck traffic in Australia and diesel emissions have resulted in much higher than average rates of asthma in children attending the Wembley Avenue Primary School. We have also been the site of toxic waste storage facilities, some of them operated by criminals. Some 30 years ago, we had the Butler Transport fire and then the fire at Coode Island. Perhaps naively, we believed that adequate measures would then be implemented to prevent repetitions of these disasters. Last August's toxic waste fire in Tottenham proved our hopes to be groundless and it has been followed by other incidents. I have lived and worked in Yarraville and nearby suburbs for 34 years and am tired of the cycle of disasters, inquiries, recommendations and then backsliding. There is no excuse for disasters such as the Tottenham fire and we need root and branch reform to prevent anything similar from ever happening again. Hence, I make the following recommendations:

1. That all toxic waste facilities, truck depots and similar be removed from proximity to residential areas;
2. That such facilities are not situated on waterways;
3. That the idea of self-regulation is consigned to the rubbish bin and replaced with stringent government control;
4. That the EPA be given much larger resources;
5. That the current EPA practice of informing businesses in advance of inspections is stopped permanently because "cowboy" operators merely clean up beforehand and then go back to their old ways;
6. That those found guilty of deliberate flouting of environmental laws or criminal negligence be punished, as the Firefighters' Union is demanding, with penalties up to and including stiff prison sentences;
7. Such penalties should also be applied to other firms using the services of "shady" operators such as those behind the Tottenham fire;
8. That officials of unions with coverage of workers in industries handling toxic waste be given the right to

- unimpeded entry of such premises to carry out inspections to ensure the health and safety of employees;
9. That the transport of toxic wastes through residential areas is banned, along with through truck traffic in general;
 10. That single use plastic is banned and urgent steps are taken to eliminate the use of all plastics as far as possible;
 11. That a public education campaign is launched to educate citizens on the need for recycling and to inform them of what, precisely, is recyclable;
 12. That such a campaign should be predicated on an understanding that the fundamental industrial ethos should be what is socially and ecologically good, rather than what is good for business.

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File1:

File2:

File3: