

To: SCEW Secretariat

Subject: The impacts on health of air quality in Australia Senate enquiry

30/5/13

To Whom it May Concern,

Submission re Wood smoke

I lived in Scotland at the time of coal fires, my town of [REDACTED], like Armidale is in a valley, and had very poor air quality in winter. In the 1970's installing solid fuel heaters and coal fires in new homes was banned. A couple of years before I visited my 82 year old aunt in 2010 her home was renovated. She was almost the last person in [REDACTED] to submit to the changes, she loved her coal fire. Now she loves the convenience of her gas heating. [REDACTED] is now a beautiful town on the tourist track, and has fresh, clean air all year.

I believe that Armidale and the rest of Australia has no choice but to go the same way.

The Government is responsible for providing a healthy environment for the residents. The Government is failing in this responsibility, the air quality in winter does not set high standards.

As happened in Scotland, I recommend a lengthy time of change, starting with banning the installation of solid fuel heaters within the city and town boundaries.

Education is important - it would be good to have all residents working towards the same goal - clean air

This must be ongoing education over the next 30 or so years. Armidale has an itinerant population with the University. Every year the new students, staff, and Armidale residents will require education on the correct burning of stoves, reasons to remove the fuel stove if renovating etc.

This must be viewed as a very long term project. There are factors which make this a difficult task-

- The high cost to each resident in making the change to other forms of heating
- The poor building standards in the cold old drafty houses, which are frequently rented accommodation.
- The lack of government funding at this time to assist with this change.
- The pressure from those with a commercial interest in installing heaters and burning solid fuel.

I propose the development of a 30 year plan to cease the use of solid fuel heaters within city and town boundaries. The plan should include:

- Banning the installation of wood heaters within city and town boundaries from 2014.
- Community education re pollution levels and health issues.
- Financial support (maybe State or Federal assistance) for residents to change to alternative heating.

It can only be beneficial to Australia in every way to have clean air.

Yours Faithfully

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