

"Waste-to-energy" is just burning rubbish



Waste-to-energy incinerators do not eliminate waste - in fact they generate it by transforming the original waste into new forms of waste: air pollution, climate emissions, ash and liquid discharge.

- 1** Incinerators release dangerous chemicals including dioxins, mercury and cadmium that can cause cancer, nerve damage and birth defects.¹
- 2** Incinerators cause climate change. Every tonne of waste burnt produces up to 1.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide.²
- 3** Incinerators destroy resources that could be used elsewhere. More than half of what is currently incinerated could have been recycled or composted.²
- 4** Incinerators still require landfills for the tonnes of toxic ash and other waste streams they create everyday. They don't solve the 'waste problem' but rather create a bigger problem.
- 5** Incinerators destroy jobs. For every one job an incinerator creates, recycling centres create 36 jobs, and reuse activities create 296 jobs.³
- 6** Incinerators harm the transition to a circular economy⁴ further driving up emissions. Since both non-recyclable and recyclable waste can be burned in an incinerator, waste prevention and recycling are discouraged, locking-in an increasing generation of waste and emissions over time.⁵
- 7** Incinerators don't create energy, they use energy. Incinerators require the addition of very large quantities of fossil fuels to keep them burning - so much so that it is more efficient and cleaner to simply burn the fossil fuel directly. "Waste-to-energy" is just an industry term to cloak dirty waste disposal.

Alone, among waste management options, incineration knowingly creates hazardous waste where none existed in the feedstock (mixed solid waste).

1] [Facts about "waste-to-energy" incinerators](#), Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives 2018 & [Particle Pollution Exposure, United States Environmental Protection Agency](#)

2] [Understanding the carbon impacts of Waste to Energy incineration, Zero Waste Europe, 2020.](#)

3] [Re-use has higher employment potential than recycling](#), RREUSE.

4] [Zero Waste Europe - Waste-to-energy is not sustainable](#)

5] [Zero Waste Europe - Deliver pay waste incineration causes recycling slow](#)

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**REGENERATION
NOT INCINERATION**