

4 November 2003

Environment and Heritage Committee
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Secretary: *Frankston*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

Dear Committee Members

INQUIRY INTO SUSTAINABLE CITIES 2025

I welcome and appreciate the opportunity to submit comments towards your abovementioned inquiry.

My interest and strongest encouragement to you lies solely with solid fuel combustion heaters and their intoxicating emissions.

Since 1994, my Mother and I have endured miserable living conditions and ill-health from the chimney stack emissions of our neighbour. We have tried all avenues:

- . sensible discussions
- . local Council assistance (advice to our neighbours on good burning practices, which I might add, was quickly forgotten the following day)
- . legal action (we received a settlement for our illness, but were unable to enforce modifications)
- . installation of fully ducted air-conditioning and ioniser/filter unit in our home.

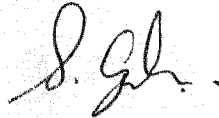
It's been a nightmare path, which has left my Mother with chronic, permanent, dry-eye syndrome; both of us have weakened lungs and are now extremely allergic and sensitive to any emissions/perfumes/cleaning product odours/car park fumes, etc.

We live in our home sealed up for the winter (duration of our neighbour's burning season), and try to tolerate their right to use their appliance, and enjoy their home, but often wonder why we are unable to do likewise in our home?

But more worrying to us is the increase in the number of installations that have occurred in recent times in our neighbourhood. Some homes go so far as to have two (2) appliances installed - one in the lower garage/workshop area under the house, and another in the upper lounge/family room; and in a nearby low-set home there is a combustion heater in the lounge and another in the garage/workshop/garden shed. My concern is heightened if we all installed one wood-burning heater in our home, the state of our air quality would be dismal enough, let alone if we all took it upon ourselves to instal two!

Other neighbours who are renting accommodation are not left out of the wood-burning romance either. Braziers are very popular up here in the tropics, smoking merrily away on decks, verandahs, pergolas, and any other outdoor area where one can snuggled up and make more pollution. I constantly question why back-yard fires and incinerators were banned, and yet this is allowed to continue, particularly with high-density housing becoming a necessity in these modern and space-saving times.

It's high time to begin discouraging putting a match to combustionables, and revert to the many other heating methods which have much less impact on the environment/air quality/neighbours' lung health. I ask that you raise suitable legislation which will improve our air quality and limit the industry that is needlessly polluting it.



Ms Suzanne Gordon