

Tuesday, 15 June 2021, 19:30–21:00 BST

**Health and air quality impacts of pollution from waste incineration
by XR Zero Waste
supported by Stop the Edmonton Incinerator Now and Zero Waste Europe**

About this event

This XR Zero Waste panel discussion brings together experts to present what is known—and what remains poorly understood—about waste incinerator pollutants and their impact on human health and air quality, particularly in areas surrounding these facilities.

In the UK, waste incinerators are three times more likely to be built in the most deprived areas, and many people are unaware that incinerators operate or are planned close to where they live. These factors give rise to public health as well as social justice concerns, given that communities of colour tend to be disproportionately affected by pollution and related health impacts. The panel discussion will focus on the health risks to people living around incinerators and beyond. It will also consider the policy implications of the scientific evidence, including arguments for the precautionary principle to be applied in planning decisions regarding waste incinerators. Together with our partners Stop the Edmonton Incinerator Now and Zero Waste Europe, XR Zero Waste is pleased to announce the following speakers:

- **Geraint Davies**, who will moderate the event, is the UK Member of Parliament (Labour and Co-op) for Swansea West, Wales. He is the chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Air Pollution and a member of the UK's Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee, having previously served on the Environmental Audit Committee. He is due to re-present his Clean Air Bill, which previously had cross-party support, with 125 parliamentarians calling for it to be incorporated in the UK government's Air Quality Strategy. He is pressing to ensure that the UK's Environment Bill includes ambitious WHO targets for air pollution, better defines cross-departmental responsibility for cleaner air, and provides strong enforcement through an improved Office of Environmental Protection.

- **Kirsten Bouman** works on biomonitoring projects for ToxicoWatch, an independent non-profit organisation dedicated to raising awareness of toxic hazards, providing evidence-based policy advice to governments and industry actors, and establishing the precautionary principle as a guideline for decision-makers. The biomonitoring research is focused on tracing the sources of persistent organic pollutants (POPs), such as dioxins, in waste, flue gas, and biomarkers (such as chicken eggs and human mothers' milk), particularly in the vicinity of waste incinerators.

- **Dr Dominic Hogg** founded the environmental consultancy Eunomia, where he worked for 20 years. He has undertaken a number of reviews and assessments of the climate change and air quality impacts of waste treatment facilities. He has a degree in physics, a Master's in development economics, and a PhD in economics. He recently began work as an independent environmental consultant through a new company, Equanimator.

- **Prof. Vyvyan Howard** is a medically qualified toxico-pathologist and Emeritus Professor of Bioimaging in the Centre for Molecular Biosciences at the University of Ulster. In 2019, he served as a member of the Particulate Research Group, which found that filter systems of waste incinerators may not be effective at blocking nanoparticles (PM_{2.5} and smaller), raising concerns about long-term health impacts on communities in the vicinities of such plants. He has investigated the toxicology of nanoparticles, which is of considerable importance to understanding the hazards associated with waste incineration, and co-edited a book entitled *Particulate Matter: Properties and Effects upon Health* (Oxford: BIOS Scientific Publishers, 1999). He also appeared in the 2012 film *Trashed*, presented by Jeremy Irons.

- **Ruggero Ridolfi**, MD, is an oncologist with more than 40 years of clinical experience. He was the manager and one of the authors of a 2020 study of the accumulation of metals in the toenails of children who live near waste incinerators: *Biomonitoring of Metals in Children Living in an Urban Area and Close to Waste Incinerators*. He runs the Forlì–Cesena (Italy) section of the International Society of Doctors for the Environment (ISDE), has coordinated the Environment and Cancer Project of the Italian Association of Medical Oncology (AIOM), and is the author of more than 170 scientific publications and a reviewer for 12 international indexed journals.