

General Manager
Armidale Dumaresq Council
Armidale 2350.

9 Baird Place
Armidale 2350

13 April, 2010.

Dear Sir,

With reference to discussions on AIR QUALITY in ARMIDALE:

My submission is in two parts – my own experience of poor air quality in the winter since I moved to Armidale almost nine years ago and the second is my recommendation as to what should be done now and in the future.

When I moved to the east end of Donnelly Street I experienced trouble with wheeziness and blocked sinuses all night. My form of heating was ducted air conditioning but smoke would come into the house under the front door, even though I blocked it up, and under the garage roll-a-door, which was impossible to remedy.

Two years ago I moved to North Hill again heated by air conditioning. An unexpected bonus was that my chest and sinus problems cleared up. The crosswinds there apparently blow away the woodsmoke in the area and away from my house.

Armidale's topography makes the woodsmoke problems very severe in the open areas around the valley of the Creeklands and up the hill around the CBD and cathedrals.

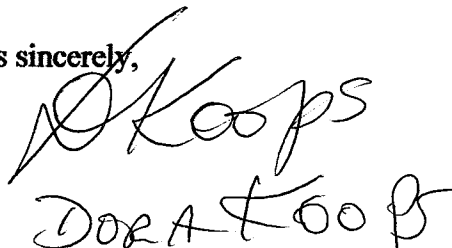
So, the only way to tackle this problem, which is a serious public health issue, is to phase out woodburning altogether . After all, smoke is pollution.

The first step is to forbid installation of woodburning stoves in new homes. The second, probably already in place, is to rule that all current stoves must be inspected for efficient burning and minimal smoke emissions. The third is to subsidise improvements in the homes of elderly people who cannot afford the changes. The fourth, and best, is to encourage people to switch over to other forms of heating altogether.

Another serious issue is that of the firewood itself. Conservation and environmental issues have to be addressed. At the meeting at the Town Hall recently it was mentioned that much of it is now obtained from Queensland. Unless a special-purpose plantation were established nearby, the use of wood for heating becomes increasingly unacceptable.

The issue of pollution would still remain. As also mentioned at the same meeting, until Launceston (a comparable city) had reduced its woodburning to below 25% of the homes there, no appreciable difference in the level of pollution was achieved.

Yours sincerely,


DORA KOOPS