



Willetton and Leeming residents gather outside the RRRRC in Canning Vale, demanding a solution to allow them to breathe more freely.

Residents unite for an odour-free life

By CARMELLE SANDER

HAVING fresh, clean air should not be an issue, but for some locals an odour-free environment is becoming a rarity.

Residents from Willetton and Leeming have this week spoken out about the emotional trauma of living near the Regional Resource Recovery Centre (RRRC), off Bannister Road in Canning Vale.

Rod and Bev Olsen from Willetton, who recently founded the Canning Melville Community Odour Action Group, said the odour being omitted from the facility was unbearable and had reached a point where enough was enough.

"There are a number of residents in Leeming, Willetton and parts of Canning Vale and Bull Creek who are at the end of their tether with this recycling plant," Mr Olsen said.

"The smell is so incredibly awful that many residents have stopped entertaining and having family and friends round for a barbecue or party - we've seriously had enough."

According to Mrs Olsen, the odour problems started in 2003. "Many residents

have recorded that the odour started about three years ago, but it's only in the past eight months that the problem has spiralled out of control," she said.

"You can't go outside, you don't want to breathe it in - it's like living in a rubbish tip day in and day out."

Run by the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council, the facility reduces household materials sent to landfill by breaking it down to produce mulch.

In response to the odour problems experienced since the plant's commissioning, the SMRC has carried out various studies and made many changes to the odour control system and to the composting operations.

An odour report released in May says that a \$2.5 million upgrade is needed to target the odour problem.

According to the review, the cause of this problem was found to be a combination of an inadequate air exchange rate for the building, and a collection duct work design.

The bio filters have struggled to maintain an adequate level of odour removal performance in recent times and is now due for a total replacement.

Despite the SMRC's efforts to tackle the odour problem, residents are not convinced the upgrade will be the best solution.

"They (SMRC) keep telling us they need new bio filters, but they haven't once told us these new bio filters will actually solve the odour problem once and for all," Mr Olsen said.

Mrs Olsen said the time had come for government bodies to take action and listen to residents' cry for help.

"It's really affecting our livelihoods - we either need the plant to close down altogether or relocate."

Riverton MLA Tony McRae said it was not okay that resident should have to endure the (smell), and the plant must be made to operate within its approved conditions or be closed.

The action group has sent a letter to Premier Alan Carpenter requesting a meeting.

• If you live in the area and have experienced an odour problem from the facility, contact Mr Olsen on 0410 463 737 or email olsenfam@wn.com.au

Alternatively if you would like to report the smell, call 6250 8089 (daytime) or 0427 193 873 (after hours).

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