

## Smoke Complaint - 3.9.2012

3rd September 2012

EPA Division – AIR  
Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment  
Level 7, 134 Macquarie Street  
Hobart  
TAS. 7000  
EPAEnquiries@environment.tas.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,  
Smoke Complaint – 3/9/2012 Backyard Burning at Grindelwald.

At about 9.45am this morning I was out the front of my property and got caught in strong smoke. I went around the back to go inside and the smoke was thick. I noticed considerable blue smoke rising from the direction of what I thought was at the rear of properties #11 or #11a Alpine Crescent. The smoke was so thick it was hard to determine the exact source. (My wife later went to look and confirmed the smoke was coming from #13 Alpine Crescent). I was hopeful the smoke might subside but as time went on it could be smelt quite strongly in our house.

Somewhere around 11.00am I telephoned the pollution complaints line at the EPA. I was transferred to the Senior Environmental Officer (Mr. Robert Trimble) up here in the North who confirmed the owner was allowed to burn but could not cause environmental nuisance. I was directed to West Tamar Council for them to deal with my complaint.

I contacted WTC and spoke to the Acting EHO (Ms Megan Whattley). Ms Whattley took my verbal complaint and said she would need to speak to a senior person. We determined the block size was over 2000 square meters.

Later this afternoon I spoke again with Ms Whattley. She indicated that she had seen that the burn was coming from #13 but could not determine that it was an environmental nuisance because for this to occur it needed to affect a significant number of people and it was not doing that at the time Ms Whattley was there.

This smoke affected my wife and I. It has made me ill and I will be ill for some considerable time. As an asthmatic I do not just get better when the smoke stops. It stopped us enjoying our property on a perfect day and ruined the amenity. Since this smoke started I have been confined to indoors, on prescription medication, and medical oxygen. At this point there is still the possibility I will be hospitalised as a result of it.

This back yard burning problem in Tasmania needs to be addressed and dealt with. People are tired of hearing various levels of government blaming the other while people are made to suffer as a result of inaction. We have Environmental Acts and Regulations enacted in this state and yet they are not being administered properly when it comes to deliberate smoke events.

There seems to be a lot of bluff being used against those who are seriously affected by the smoke and legitimately complain. Vulnerable groups, ie, the young, the elderly, those with cancer, and those with respiratory or cardiac disease, are not being protected.

It is no fun being asphyxiated.

Please accept this as an official smoke complaint.

I look forward to hearing back from you and what is planned to do about it, after it is fully investigated.