



28th October 2011

Dear Ms Omar,

***RE: LEGISLATIVE INQUIRY INTO COCKBURN CEMENT LTD. -
MUNSTER***

We write to you with our list of complaints regarding Cockburn Cement.

1. Health:

We have two young children. Our eldest son is two and a half. Since he was born he has suffered from eczema and respiratory inflammations. We have seen multiple Dr's regarding his health problems. While the Dr's cannot specify the exact causes of his eczema, they have all indicated that there is an 'irritant in the air' which he seems to react to. He is on two different types of topical treatment for the eczema and constantly suffers from an irritating cough.

2. Odour:

Being on the westerly side of Beeliar, I believe we receive the full impact of Cockburn Cement. This means we regularly have a revolting odour blow over us. This impacts on us because:

- With 2 children it can become unbearable to play outside when the smell is bad. This is unfair on our kids to have to make them play inside.
- Visitors to our house have commented on how bad the smell is on a number of occasions.
- There are some days when gardening and hanging out the washing is out of the question as the smell burns your nostrils

It concerns me greatly that my family are breathing in this foul air!

3. Dust:

- We have noticed that our plants (especially in the front garden – the most exposed) are covered in a fine dust. It makes the plants look 'sickly'. Why we would love to put the hose on these plants to keep them looking healthy we are on water restrictions so we are unable to wash it off.

- Having children means some toys are kept outside (bikes, trikes, chalk board etc.), these toys are covered in a fine layer of dust constantly. It worries me that the kids are playing with this dust and then putting their hands in their mouths. Quite regularly we put all the toys on the back lawn and let the reticulation clean them.
- Our back table, which we use regularly is always covered in a black dust. We have to wipe the table and chairs down every time we use them. The hardest to clean are the cushions on the chairs – the fabric gets damaged from the fine dust.
- Cleaning the house: I like a clean house but the dust means it's almost impossible to achieve this. Our window sills are caked in dust, our flyscreens on the front door and our wooden venetian blinds at the front of the house are covered in it. Our front door knob - which is silver was turning a nice shade of black from the dust. Have you ever heard of having to 'clean' your front door knob! Our white skirting boards are constantly covered in a layer of dust (making them look grey). I feel like I spend half my time cleaning the house to get rid of the dust when I could be doing better things with my time.

My main concerns with Cockburn Cement are:

1. Health impact on surrounding residents
2. Standard of living – why bother having a nice backyard to play in or lovely walking tracks in nearby regional parks when the odour is so horrific you can't even go outside!
3. Real estate impact: we built this home to raise our family. We don't particularly want to sell, however we have seriously considered it. We are afraid that the negative media coverage the plant is receiving will impact on future house prices in the area.
4. Food we eat: there is a market garden at the end of our road. They grow and sell vegetables to shops. How does the dust emissions impact on their soil and / or the vegetable itself? Has anyone studied this soil?

How Cockburn Cement is addressing the emissions?

I read the newspapers and I see regular reports on what Cockburn Cement promise to do. My question is: Cockburn Cement has acknowledged there is a fault with Kiln 6 – yet they are taking 2 years to sort it out. Why not take action sooner? Why not bag-house all the kilns to solve the problem once and for all? Are they going to let this drag out for many years to come? I feel they are half-hearted in their attempts to 'keep the people happy' while still ensuring they reach record profits.

My question to the government is:

Why did you release land so close to Cockburn Cement when there was already a problem? We've lived here for 4 years and there were problems before then (unbeknown to us – obviously!). I would like to see the politicians and high-end managers of Cockburn Cement at my house – to breathe in the air and to sit on our dirty table and chairs.

I understand that Cockburn Cement is a part of the Adelaide Brighton Group. Upon investigating this group I found that in 2009 their revenue was **\$987.2 million dollars**. This revenue was in the midst of a Global Financial Crisis. I'd hate to think what it would have been if it was a 'bumper' year for them. So, surely a filter on each kiln is not an unacceptable suggestion?

I look forward to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Cockburn Cement and seeing what the outcome will be. Let's hope it gets investigated thoroughly and outcomes abound before we get the likes of Erin Brockovich on the case making an embarrassment of the government.

Yours Sincerely,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'E Brunt' and the signature on the right is 'S Brunt'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Elizabeth and Steven Brunt