

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0272/03
by Rosa Díez González (PSE)
to the Commission

Subject: Commissioning of a specified risk material (SRM) incinerator

Over 1000 inhabitants of the villages of Térmens and Vallfogona de Balaguer in the province of Lleida have signed a petition against plans for an incinerator that is to be constructed by the company GREFACSA.

The application to construct an incinerator to burn around 40 000 tonnes per annum of animal meal originating from animals and organs classified as SRMs (specified risk materials) was published in the Official Journal of the Generalitat de Catalunya on 5 November 2002. I understand this SRM classification to mean that these animals were liable to have suffered diseases such as the transmissible spongiform encephalopathies commonly known as 'mad cow' diseases.

Various scientific reports indicate that incinerators produce carcinogenic synthetic substances which remain stable for long periods in the air, water and soil.

Is the Commission aware of the construction of this incinerator?

How many such incinerators are there in Europe?

What current legislation governs this area and has or will a Community directive be issued in this regard?

What are the maximum permissible emissions?

To what extent might the incinerator affect the environment and especially the health of people living under 10 kilometres away?