

STEPHENSON AND WARD BIOMEDICAL INCINERATOR, EMISSION SCRUBBING DEVICES,  
BYPASS INCIDENTS

132. Hon Jim Scott to the Minister for Housing and Works representing the Minister for the Environment and Heritage
- (1) Has the Stephenson and Ward biomedical incinerator ever bypassed its emission scrubbing devices in the three years to September 17 2002?
  - (2) If yes, how many times and on what dates did these bypass situations occur?
  - (3) Will the Minister list the reasons given by the company for each of these bypass incidents?
  - (4) Were emission monitoring tests conducted during the bypass incidents to determine the pollution concentrations leaving the stack of the incinerator?
  - (5) If yes, what were the pollution concentrations measured for each bypass incident?
  - (6) Has any assessment been made of the public health risks presented by the Stephenson and Ward incinerator emissions during bypass incidents?
  - (7) If yes, will the Minister table that report?

Hon TOM STEPHENS replied:

- (1) Yes
- (2) According to Department of Environmental Protection records, 24 times.
  - 2002: 5 February  
6 February  
20 February
  - 2001: 29 January  
29 January  
30 January  
14 February  
26 February  
8 March  
9 March  
13 March  
13 March  
13 March  
21 March  
20 December
  - 2000: 28 January  
21 February  
10 March  
7 June  
20 July  
1 August  
26 September  
10 October  
27 October
- 3) Reasons for the incidents are as follows:
  - 2002 operator error.  
accident by an electrician tripping a circuit breaker.  
corrosion of inlet into the spray chamber of the incinerator.
  - 2001 majority of the incidents were due to power failures or electrical faults.
  - 2000 majority of the incidents were due to power failures.
- 4) No. Tests were not carried out because the incinerator is not required to have continuous monitoring of emissions, and it is not possible to predict when a bypass is going to occur.  
  
However, the DEP requires that emissions from the incinerator are tested twice per year to ensure that the incineration process is operating in accordance with its licence emissions limits.

- 5) Not applicable.
- 6) No. The DEP has advised that the bypass incidents typically only last a few minutes and therefore do not represent a significant health threat. The incinerator has been completely shut down on occasions where the incident has lasted for more than a few minutes.
- 7) Not applicable.