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Jump to it, little aths is calling you

As winter sport comes to an end for another year, thoughts will start turning to summer activities.

Corio Little Athletics Centre is encouraging youngsters between five and 16 to try athletics this season and has a come and try day on Friday September 29, the AFL grand final public holiday.

The season begins on October 7 and the centre has five clubs competing together, not against each other – Corio West, Corio South, Bell Park, Golden Plains and Lara.

■ See page 33 for the full story.

Anoop, Tobias and Jaxx clear the hurdle and can't wait for the start of the Little Aths SEASON. (Ivan Kemp) 343149_03

Lara says no to incinerator

By Matt Hewson

Community groups are mobilising to raise awareness of and oppose Prospect Hill International's (PHI) application to build a huge waste-to-energy incinerator just hundreds of metres from residential dwellings in Lara.

The community will hold a public rally at Austin Park in Lara at 11am on Saturday, September 16 to protest the facility. PHI's application is currently before the EPA, which is in its final stages of its assessment of the proposal.

PHI contends in its application that the project "aligns with Victorian Government waste policy", "supports energy from waste as a transition solution to reducing the use of

landfill" and would create hundreds of jobs during construction and around 30 ongoing positions during the facilities operation.

However, environmentalists, health experts and residents oppose the plant for many reasons, including human health impacts, greenhouse gas and noise emissions, the undermining of best waste management practices and the visual impact of the facility's 80-metre stack.

At a community meeting at Lara Golf Club last week a crowd of about 150 residents heard from a panel including Australian National University senior lecturer Dr Peter W Tait and Greens MP Dr Sarah Mansfield.

Lara resident Charles Street, who helped organise the meeting, said community members were nearly universally opposed to

the incinerator.

"At the meeting an audience member stood up and asked, how many people are opposed to this?" Mr Street said.

"Almost every hand in the room went straight up. The Lara community is opposed to this."

Mr Street said the biggest concern for residents was the potential risks to human health, a concern supported by current scientific understanding.

Dr Peter Tait, along with 10 other doctors, reviewed all scientific publications about waste incineration and public health," he said.

"They found significant associations between waste incineration and the occurrence of cancers, preterm births, miscarriages, birth defects and infant deaths."

Dr Mansfield pledged at the meeting to sponsor the community's petition to the state government to block the incinerator.

"It's very clear local residents have done their homework and don't want this project going ahead," she said.

"Waste incineration is not safe, it's not clean, and it's not renewable."

"Residents have got serious concerns about the health and environmental fallout of having a massive, waste-guzzling incinerator near their schools and houses and they won't be backing down on this."

Cr Hathway said Geelong council had not yet taken a position on the proposal, but she hoped to get formal discussions happening between councillors this week.

PHI did not respond to requests for comment.

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