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## TIME TO START AFRESH WITH THE SMRC

Dr Mike Nahan, the Member for Riverton, said it is time to start over with the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council's waste processing facility.

"The fire that destroyed the SMCR's materials recycling plant this morning was a tragedy. The plant was losing money in the current environment and it will need to be replaced," said Dr Nahan.

"However, the recycling plant was the single properly functioning part of the SMRC's operation. The other two parts of the facility, the green waste and composting plants, continue to malfunction."

"The green waste plant has been closed because of odour issues. The composting plant continues to emit excessive odours, is losing large amounts of money, has major engineering faults, there is no market for its product and it has lost the support of the community."

Dr Nahan said the whole facility will need to be replaced, perhaps with different technology and in a different location.

"A starting point for the renewal process must be the resignation of Chairman Doug Thompson and the CEO Stuart McAll," said Dr Nahan.

These two men have been responsible for the mismanagement of the SMRC, including:

- Denial of odour problems facing the local community
- Failure to address odour emissions after six years of complaints
- Ridiculing members of the community with a series of YouTube videos
- The announced withdrawal of the City of Canning from the SMRC
- Failure to provide adequate financial and operating details of the facility
- Refusal to provide public access to its health report
- The facility is subject to a current Environmental Protection Notice
- Adverse findings in a recent Legislative Council report
- The loss of substantial amounts of ratepayer's money over the last six years
- The waste management fee to ratepayers for processing waste increasing from \$30/tonne in 2002 when the plant started operation to \$148/tonne today with a further 30% increase scheduled for July 2009.
- The questionable investment of \$500,000 in a high risk investment with Lehman Brothers and the subsequent loss of \$475,000 of that amount because of it.

"If this was a private sector firm the SMRC would be in receivership and there would be an investigation into it. Similar standards should apply to the public sector, the same as in the private sector, particularly with an essential service like waste processing," said Dr Nahan.

"I will work with the member councils of the SMCR, the WA Local Government Association and the community to develop a replacement for the plant and put waste management in the region on a more sustainable path."

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