

GAS WATCH 198.

GOVERNMENT PRODUCES DRAFT PLANNING POLICY BANNING CSG DEVELOPMENT IN THE VINEYARDS.

AGL Energy thumbs its nose.

Today, **AGL** said they had not even read the public consultation draft.

In an extraordinary, but predictable, display of ignorance and arrogance, **AGL** called a meeting today to discuss their CSG drilling in the Hunter Vineyards, revealing that they hadn't even read the public consultation draft SEPP banning CSG in the vineyards.

"Haven't had time" said the **AGL** Community Relations person, Alison Croker.

Astonishing! Probably the most important document that has ever been published in relation to **AGL's** coal seam methane drilling in the Hunter, and they hadn't made the time to read it.

AGL reps mightn't have read the short 7 page document, but they weren't caught unawares:

- In February, 2011 local member George Souris made it clear to **AGL** that he would not support them drilling for methane in the vineyards.
- In 2012 Minister Brad Hazzard said that **AGL** was *"wasting its shareholders money"*.
- On 19th February, 2013 Premier O'Farrell made it clear that **AGL** would not obtain a production licence.
- On 25th February, 2013 **AGL** CEO Michael Fraser met with Premier O'Farrell.
- On 15th March, 2013 the Director General of Planning wrote *"These new initiatives include the banning of all new coal seam gas exploration and production activity in certain areas including the Upper Hunter equine and viticulture critical industry clusters identified in the Upper Hunter Strategic Regional Land Use Plan."*

BUT, in the face of all those facts, the **AGL** representatives said that proposed to continue drilling at Broke, then drill at Milbrodale, and then later in 2013 conduct seismic testing. We are waiting to see what they propose to do in relation to their planned fracking later in the year.

"What is the point in exploration drilling when you know you won't be able to obtain a licence to extract any coal seam methane in the future" we asked.

"We want to see what's there" said **AGL** representative Ben Doran.

"We are obliged to continue exploring under our Petroleum Exploration Licence" said another rep Bruce Hayward.

"Why don't you ask the Government to relieve you from any obligations, in the circumstances, when you know you a production licence will never be issued?" we probed. *"That's a commercial decision and we can't answer that"* they said.

How much longer will **AGL** continue to treat the community of the Hunter Valley with utter contempt, risking our health, our water, our businesses and our lifestyles, by chasing a shadow.

How much more of their shareholders money will **AGL** waste in chasing a dead end?

FAREWELL - AGL