

GAS WATCH 228.

AGL - now pumping salt onto agricultural land.

Hullo, **AGL!** A shandy of fresh water and salt water doesn't reduce the amount of salt going into the soil. The same amount of salt is still there.

AGL issued a media release last week, crowing that it was irrigating cattle feed crops with salty water from coal seams.

AGL says that it is blending good fresh water with salty coal seam water to irrigate its property.

Salty water used for irrigation results in soil salinisation rendering it unfit for raising most crops and plants.

And what does the process of increasing the salt content of soil do to the soil? As the soil salinity increases the consequences include:

- Destruction of soil structure;
- Detrimental effects on plant growth and yield. The plants use the water and the salt is left behind;
- Damage to infrastructure (roads, bricks, corrosion of pipes and cables);
- Reduction of water quality for users, sedimentation problems;
- Soil erosion ultimately, when crops are too strongly affected by the amounts of salts.

And it might be added that the coal seam water not only contains salt but also Arsenic, Beryllium, Cadmium, Chromium, Copper, Fluoride, Formaldehyde, Lead, Mercury, Nickel, Radon and more.

AGL says that this is an irrigation trial. There is a plethora of scientific information on the detrimental effects of introducing salt into soil. Quite simply it should not be done.

Whilst **AGL** is producing cattle feed now, once the salt content of the soil reaches a certain level, the area will be unfit for raising any crops. **AGL** should stop experimenting in areas where it has no expertise. **AGL** should learn to look to the future of our environment instead of experimenting with their current poisoning of agricultural land.

The NSW Office of Water should put a stop to this immediately. We have written to the Office requesting that they order an immediate end to this environmentally dangerous experiment and have **AGL** dispose of its contaminated in an environmentally acceptable manner.

AGL should go back to knocking on doors, issuing "don't knock on my door" stickers, and providing electricity to those households who will deal with them, and leave farming to farmers.



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