

GAS WATCH 252.

**BOTH AGL ENERGY AND THE GOVERNMENT MUST PUT A STOP TO THE CSG POISONING OF THE ENVIRONMENT.
Neither body seems to know what it is doing.**

It is time this Government realised the dangers of CSG fracking. The CSG industry simply can't do it, safely or at all.

The Government called for an investigation and report by the Chief Scientist. They have that report in with 16 recommendations which the Chief Scientist reported needed to be implemented to make the coal seam methane gas industry able to be managed.

Both the Government and AGL have accepted the recommendations however AGL, with the support of the Government, continues to explore for CSG and continues their fracking of coal seams with all the attendant risks. Nothing has yet been done to enshrine the Chief Scientist's recommendations into law, other than to put off any decisions until after the next State election in March.

And clearly AGL Energy has proved itself unfit to be operating at all in the current environment.

We have published AGL's behaviour in the CSG arena previously.

How can this Government continue supporting AGLs exploration in the Hunter, or anywhere else for that matter. Here is what we know of AGL's history to date. And we see that AGL have recently changed their advertising company after 7 years to McCann Melbourne. McCann is sure going to have its work cut out to explain away AGL's behaviour:

1. AGL claim to have voluntarily suspended fracking in Gloucester after flowback water tested for BTEX chemicals – chemicals banned by the Government; chemicals which are poisonous; chemicals which are thought to be cancer inducing. EPA says that there is “effectively a stop work order” on the continued fracking in Gloucester. It doesn't matter whether these BTEX chemicals were injected or whether they came up naturally in the fracking process (as AGL is now claiming). If they were injected then AGL is in serious breach and should be prosecuted to the extent of the law and have its Exploration Licences cancelled. If the chemicals were drawn up in the fracking process it underlines the fact that fracking coal seams should be immediately stopped to stop such chemicals being brought to the surface or introduced into aquifers or ground water.
2. AGL acknowledges that its contractor treated and then dumped 600,000 litres of treated fracking water into the Hunter Water sewerage system, contrary to the written and verbal prohibition of Hunter Water.
3. AGL was spraying salty water onto pasture on the floodplain outside Gloucester, notwithstanding that the EPA said the water was “high strength effluent”. The Government had approved this spraying and sidelined the EPA report. It is thought that this spraying would dump 2,500 tonnes of salt per year onto the surrounding farmland.
4. AGLs Annual Report claimed that their Hunter Petroleum Exploration Licence had been renewed. It hasn't and AGL was forced to correct its report.
5. AGL breached its Environment Protection Licence at Camden gas works by failing to monitor air emissions for some 3 years and a penalty was applied.
6. AGL has announced that it will frack coal seams in Hunter Valley vineyards some time in the next 5 to 100 years notwithstanding it had declared at a public meeting that it would not frack because of the danger of the Bulga Inlet faule line.
7. The NSW Chief Scientist reported that the CSG industry has a “complete lack of solutions” to deal with large quantities of salt, which AGL is now sending down to Sydney following the debacle at Newcastle.

8. AGL has announced that in Gloucester it will build a desalination plant. It has been estimated that AGL will de-salt 730,000,000 litres of fracking water each year, 2,000,000 litres of water each and every day accumulating thousands of tonnes of salt with no viable plan as to how the salt will be disposed of.
9. Midcoast Water expressed disappointment at the speed of progress of AGL's Gloucester CSG project when AGL announced that it planned to frack the 4 CSG wells prior to there being comprehensive water studies as required in an agreement signed by AGL and Gloucester Council. Clearly Midcoast Water's concerns have now been found to be justified with the BTEX chemicals and others being found in the fracking water.
10. AGL was under investigation by the EPA for potential breach of an Environment Protection Licence at its Camden Gas Works.
11. AGL drilled for CSG on the historic Abbey Green property near Singleton despite Singleton Council unanimously resolving on no less than 3 occasions that it opposed CSG operations within the Singleton Local Government area.
12. AGL was issued with a "formal warning" by the Government following a blowout of a methane well near Campbelltown caused by incorrect operation of the well.
13. AGL was given a remediation order to restore after deliberately pumping a reported 300,000 litres of salt contamination water onto pasture (110,000 litres admitted by AGL) killing the pasture in breach of their licence conditions.
14. AGL failed "to comply with the Licence conditions in both of its Petroleum Exploration Licences affecting the Hunter Valley Wine country."
15. Sydney Gas, now AGL, caused a "pollution incident" at its Camden gas field ten years ago and was issued with a "Clean up notice" following the escape of fracking water containing "polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons species high in pH and salt". It appears nothing has been learned within this CSG industry in the last decade.
16. "Within a fortnight of the beginning of gas testing, a coal bed methane well north of Newcastle NSW (Stratford) was shut down as several boreholes up to 300 metres away began to blow off methane gas. This was the first reported case of a serious migration of methane gas from coal bed methane operations in New South Wales" and is right where AGL is currently fracking.
17. AGL was fined for excessive nitrogen oxide emissions from its Camden Gas Works.
18. AGL suddenly put its 66 CSG well expansion in western Sydney on hold after NSW Health called for a "comprehensive assessment of potential risks to human health."
19. Even though AGL gave evidence before the Senate Enquiry that it wouldn't force itself on any landholder, and also signed an agreement with various entities including the NSW Farmers Federation to that effect, AGL has applied for a Petroleum Production Lease over more than 5,000 hectares south of Gloucester which would include the first state of up to 110 wells, gas and water lines, a gas works, a water treatment plant, a power station and pipelines. This after winning a case against Gloucester residents who said that they didn't want to be forced to accede to this invasion of their properties and their water.

Throughout the world the dangers of fracking are well known. The contamination of ground water and aquifers rendering it useless for humans, stock and vegetation; the salinification of the soils; the diminution of ground water; the poisoning of vegetation; and plenty more.

In addition to the dangers of fracking we still have no framework to render the CSG industry "manageable" and we have continued breaches of licence conditions.

It's time to stop. From all recent reports, we don't need the gas anyway.



www.huntervalleyprotectionalliance.com

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