

# **GAS WATCH 62.**

**Sydney Gas back to old ways –  
breaching undertaking made to the community;  
threatening our underground water supply;  
risking exploding methane gas near the Broke public school**

**Broke village is in danger from any one of METHANE gas explosion, METHANE gas seepage, and contamination or loss of our underground water.**

**Why won't Sydney Gas adhere to its undertaking not to activate these wells until there has been a full water study?**

**Why won't Sydney Gas agree to a full Environmental Assessment which would be available for public scrutiny and scrutiny by other Government Departments?**

**What has Sydney Gas got to hide?**

Despite being taken over by AGL ENERGY, Sydney Gas is back to its old ways.

No sooner did we question the reasons behind Sydney Gas deferring the February meeting of the CCC, than they send out a Fact Sheet indeed saying that they will be firing up the Broke Village METHANE gas wells at the end of February, before the deferred February meeting, which is now to be held in March.

The reason for the deferment appears obvious now, doesn't it? Sydney Gas appears to have deceived both the community and the CCC.

And we thought that the takeover by AGL Energy might have assisted Sydney Gas's relationship with the community. It is early days in the take-over, but let's hope AGL Energy brings Sydney Gas into line, because there's no difference yet in the way Sydney Gas deals with the community.

Sydney Gas has breached its undertaking to the community, and to the Community Consultative Committee, that it would not do anything with the Broke village METHANE gas wells until after a fully independent water study was carried out and there was a report to the community.

In its current "Water Aquifers Fact Sheet", Sydney Gas claims that there is no danger to our underground water by their de-watering the coal seams at the Broke Village METHANE gas wells. Despite their diagrams and claims: **THIS CLAIM IS NOT TRUE.**

Why does Sydney Gas say that part of their de-watering of these METHANE gas wells is to see if our underground water drains into the coal seam, if its claims are true? Doesn't make sense, does it?

Why doesn't Sydney Gas say what it is going to do with the toxic water they take from the coal seams – are they going to store it on site with the risk of escape and leakage, as has

happened before, when they were given a “clean up” notice for their spillage of toxic water in their Campbelltown operations. Or are they going to truck it out with dozens, or hundreds, of heavy tanker movements through the village and down the Putty Road?

We’re being told almost nothing.

Put quite simply, there is a real risk of contamination of, or reduction of level of, our underground water. The water we use for our gardens.

If you would like a more scientific explanation, read on:

**Independent scientific reports reveal:**

*“Once coal bed gas is liberated by the withdrawal of water reducing the hydrostatic head, the methane is free to migrate. Geological structures, inadequately cemented conventional gas wells and extraction of produced water from coal bed methane wells can contribute to natural gas resource losses and to methane migration into surface soils and groundwater.*

*“As methane production progresses, seeps can find their way into domestic water wells, or the presence of gas seeps in pastures, manifested by dead vegetation.*

*“Methane from soil gas vapours can accumulate in confined spaces, such as beneath domestic dwellings, and may pose **potential explosion hazards**. Escalations in hydrogen sulphide gas will result in seep sites identified by stands of stressed and dying vegetation, trees and habitat.*

*“Dewatering of coal seams will allow for groundwater migration towards coal seam voids.*

*“Dewatering of the coal seams will adversely effect the groundwater system and will have a flow on effect of reduced or lost stream flow. Any further impact to stream flow caused by mining operations has the potential to cause significant impacts to the availability of potable water.*

*“Riparian vegetation and wetlands are at risk by a lowering of groundwater levels and methane migration into the overlying aquifers during gas production. Regardless of well construction geological features provide transient pathways.*

*“There is a risk of contamination by low quality water mixing with high quality surface aquifers and that discharging into streams. The extent of this is unknown and further study is required.*

**Write to your local member; write to the Prime Minister and the leader of the opposition; write to Sen The Hon. Penny Wong; write to the Hon Peter Garrett. Write to the Premier and the leader of the opposition in the State.**

**There are so many real and cogent reasons why nothing further should be done with the Broke village METHANE gas well until there is a full Environmental Assessment.**

**WE MUST STOP THIS INVASION OF OUR VILLAGE.**

**If our water goes, so does our lifestyle, and our children’s future.**

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