

9 April 2015

AGL to flare gas after discovery of coal seam gas leak at Gloucester

Local residents are outraged at the news of a coal seam gas leak a few hundred metres from homes in Gloucester, NSW.

AGL has been granted permission to flare* four gas wells because of a build up of gas at their suspended Gloucester project. This approval from the NSW Office of Coal Seam Gas (OCSG) comes just days after AGL admitted a gas leak at their problematic pilot well sites.

“AGL have been granted the ability to flare volatile organic compounds, which are known to have adverse health effects, with 50 homes and a major dairy within 2km, with some less than 600 metres from the flares,” said Groundswell Gloucester spokesperson Julie Lyford

“The flaring should not be allowed to go ahead only days after a reported gas leak, that residents only heard about after AGL said, “they've fixed it.”

“It is unacceptable that our community is being put at risk time and time again.”

“This is just another transgression by AGL who have already contaminated water systems in the Gloucester valley with toxic chemicals such as BTEX, Tolcide and Borate” and they are only the substances we know of.”

“No baseline health studies have ever been done on humans or animals. NSW Health has never been a part of the AGL CSG approval processes. They are not involved at all with the current and serious compounding issues surrounding air and water contamination in this region.”

“The milk from the closest dairy is going to the Manning Valley region and beyond. The wider community are asking serious questions about whether this milk will be tested with regard to AGL’s contamination issues.”

“How much more damage and contamination will AGL inflict on the Gloucester and Manning Valley communities, our water systems and valuable milk and beef industry?”

“Minister Roberts needs to act immediately and suspend AGL’s licence in Gloucester, pending a full inquiry into AGL's Gloucester gasfield folly.” said Ms Lyford

* Flaring is the process of disposing coal seam gas by burning it directly into the air. Coal seam gas is made up of toxic volatile organic compounds, nitrous oxides to name a few chemicals.

Available for comment Julie Lyford, Chair of Groundswell Gloucester

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For expert comment on chemicals and pollutants, Dr Mariann Lloyd-Smith, Senior Advisor, National Toxics Network Inc.