



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

1 June 2015

### **AGL could face up to \$1,000,000 penalty for illegal waste facility**

AGL is continuing to use its coal seam gas site in Gloucester farmland for storage of toxic coal seam water and returned fracking fluid.

Storing liquid waste without lawful authority is a breach of s144 of the Protection of the Environment Operations Act (POEO) Act and offending corporations face up to \$1,000,000 fine plus \$120,000 per day for continuing breaches.

Since two consecutive liquid waste facilities rejected AGL's flowback water, AGL has not been complying with its approval which states that AGL must send the contaminated fluid to an EPA licensed facility. AGL has failed to secure a third waste facility to accept the fluid, even though waste treatment facilities are presumably available elsewhere in Australia at other gasfield operations, albeit at a higher cost than AGL had estimated.

Meanwhile large volumes of fracking fluids mixed with coal seam water are still in the coal seams and gas wells and AGL cannot begin testing the Waukivory pilot CSG wells for profitability until it pumps out the fluid and also finds a way to dispose of it.

In order to pump out the remaining flowback fluid and restart the ill-fated pilot, AGL's current cut-price plan is to dump the liquid in an open dam indefinitely. Groundswell Gloucester has written to the EPA alleging that even if AGL eventually treats and disposes of the liquid, using the site to store the waste in the meantime without lawful authority, constitutes a daily breach of the POEO Act.

Local resident John Watts said "AGL pumped about 3 million litres of fracking fluid into Gloucester's coal seams without ensuring it could properly dispose of it as the approval required. Now AGL is storing this toxic waste in the middle of farmland day after day, apparently in breach of the law.

'We're fed up with AGL's apparent continuing disregard for regulations and call on the EPA and Minister Roberts to act immediately and suspend AGL's licence.'

[www.groundswellgloucester.com](http://www.groundswellgloucester.com)