



Coal Seam Gas Activities in NSW

Gemma Hicks to: csg.review@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au

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History: This message has been replied to and forwarded.

To Professor Mary O'Kane,

It has come to my attention that you are reviewing coal seam gas activities in NSW . There are potential risks involved with coal seam gas mining and I feel it would be for the public's best interest that you focused on these issues . The impacts of coal seam gas activities on human health and the environment is one of the major potential risks involved and news coming out of the Tara Region has indicated that there has been an increase in headaches , earaches, nose bleeds, asthma, lethargy and on a more serious note : neurological damage. These ailments are particularly rife among young children .

The effects on the environment and in particular to water supplies , are at risk of being exploited to the myriad chemicals used in "fracking" the gas out of the coal seams . Fracking leads to changes in pressures of adjacent aquifers , and resulting changes in water availability; reductions in surface water flows in connected systems ; land subsidence over large areas, affecting surface water systems, ecosystems, and agricultural lands. There has been no baseline studies done in previous areas where fracking has occurred therefore there can be no evidence to prove whether the water was affected in the first place . The same applies to the levels of methane leaking into the atmosphere from the wells . Again, there have been no baseline studies done on this however , scientists from SCU Lismore have tested the methane levels in the atmosphere of the "gas fields" and they are notable higher than in the non-gas field areas.

These health and environmental risk factors may be reduced if there are stricter guidelines pertaining to compliance and monitoring . Conducting comprehensive baseline studies on environmental qualities will provide a benchmark for ongoing monitoring of systems affected by CSG.

If you are to gain insight on the impacts of coal seam gas mining , I would suggest you visit coal seam gas operations and see (and hear) first hand drilling and fracking in areas where the industry is most active. You could choose from or visit all of these areas: Camden, Gloucester, the Pilliga or Casino.

I also believe it would be for your best interest to seek out or commission truly independent sources of information in order to develop fact sheets so that you aren't relying on industry information .

With regards,

Gemma Hicks.