

Submission
No 363

INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS

Name: Ms Jacinta Green

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Thank you very much for the opportunity to make a submission regarding the Coal Seam Gas Industry. Many of my thoughts and concerns have been included in the submission prepared by members of Stop CSG Sydney (with my name attached for correspondence). And I believe other submissions such as those by organisations such as Doctors for the Environment and National Toxins Network cover health issues far more coherently than I (or members of Stop CSG Sydney) could do. Similarly I have had deep discussions with Beyond Zero and have complete confidence that I would wholehearted support any submission they may make.

I believe a submission from the Illawarra, would contain detailed issues specifically surrounding water that I would also wholeheartedly support.

So I would like to take this opportunity to cover two (related) issues that are closest to my heart, and they are related to comments that are currently heard quite frequently from both the Industry and the members of the government.

- 1) That the toxic chemicals that are found naturally occurring in the coal seam (e.g. BTEX, amongst others), and that do come up in the produced water, are no worse than the chemicals that you inhale while smoking a cigarette.
- 2) The chemicals that are used in the drilling (and/or fracking) process are common chemicals that you find around the home.

I have big problems with both of these statements which are best addressed in point form.

- Chemicals that occur in cigarettes KILL YOU.
- The Federal Government is trying to reduce smoking rates for a number of reasons, all related to the toxicity of these chemicals.
- The majority of Australians (over 80%) CHOOSE not to smoke.
- Social costs of smoking in Australia estimated to be over \$30 billion per year.

- Just because chemicals are found in the home, does not mean that they are poisonous, or toxic or dangerous.
- We know what chemicals are in our homes, and we know the safety risk, and we know what precautions to take.
- An increasing number of people choose not to have chemicals in their house, often for environmental reasons, more often for health reasons.

Given that I choose not to smoke and I choose not to have chemicals in my house, and that the government is well aware of the health risks associated with some of the chemicals. Will the government guarantee to hold itself accountable for health risks into the future, if it allows this industry to continue? Or will we, in 30 years time, see people still fighting for compensation, the way they had to fight over impacts of asbestos.

Regards

Jacinta