

# your say

## Letters to the Editor

Mail: PO Box 1215  
Wollongong 2500

Email: letters@illawarramercury.com.au

Letters should be no more than 200 words and should be typed or clearly written. All letters need an address and business hours phone number for verification. By submitting your letter to us for publication you agree that we may edit the letter for legal, space or other reasonable reasons and that the letter may be published in the newspaper, on our website or in other media.

## Call for information on gas plan

Like the St Peter's disclosure of mining in the backyard of Sydney residents and the public not being adequately informed, has a Petroleum Exploration Licence been granted around Helensburgh and Darkes Forest, adjacent to the Royal National Park and Sydney water catchment?

Have gas pipelines from Lilyvale through to Helensburgh and onto a new methane gas power station at Darkes Forest been proposed?

With coal seam gas (CSG) mining proposed for this area, will "pollutant and dangerous chemicals" such as toluene, diesel, benzene, hydrochloric acid or over 700 similar chemicals, be injected into the earth's crust?

The standard worldwide practice in drilling CSG wells

has been using this typical "toxic" cocktail.

How can we be sure that the licensee or its partners won't do the same here?

With only 60 to 65 per cent of compound injected into the surface returned to the surface and captured, what proof will the licensee give to the community that the surrounding area will not be polluted or contaminated.

What plans are in place to dispose of the contaminated compound?

State Government representatives, who have a duty of care to the community, didn't even have the decency to give widespread notice of the approvals or include them in the 7d land review by Wollongong City Council.

Try walking on these lands

without getting prosecuted, but miners of CSG are allowed on unchecked.

They are allowed to ruin our heritage, our environment, our great grandchildren's great grandchildren's piece of the future we enjoy, and they walk away unchecked, even to the point of denying it's their operation that caused the problem.

These questions need to be asked now before widespread harvesting of CSG and before any further work is undertaken to ensure we protect the Sydney water catchment areas and headwaters of the Royal National Park.

Adverse health issues are arising in communities where CSG mining is being undertaken and the miners of CSG are saying to the residents, "prove

it". Well, here is the ideal opportunity, before we are faced with the same problem, for the exploration companies to show it's not them.

Residents need to take a baseline sample of their water, soil and air and get them tested before mining for CSG is started.

Requests to various stakeholders so far has yielded little quantitative information on environmental impact studies.

And a Planning NSW regional director says a community planning proposal to protect the area "would create a precedent".

Why doesn't the community have the same access to the Government and the government departments as developers?

Greg Petty, Helensburgh.