

MINISTER FOR HEALTH

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL - QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

QUESTION:

COAL SEAM GAS

The Hon. JEREMY BUCKINGHAM: My question is directed to the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, representing the Minister for Health. Given a scientific study has shown that fugitive emissions from coal seam gas production—including methane, which is normally accompanied by volatile organic compounds—is likely to be substantially higher than industry and government have estimated in the past, what action will the Government take to ensure that the health of the community of western Sydney is not compromised by AGL's existing Camden gas project and plans for another 66 wells adjoining urban areas near the Scenic Hills?

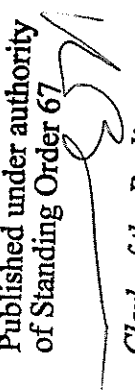
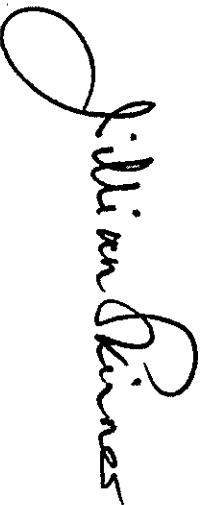
The Hon. MICHAEL GALLACHER: I thank the Hon. Jeremy Buckingham for his question. I will seek an answer from the Minister as quickly as possible.

ANSWER:

On 15 November 2012 the Hon Jeremy Buckingham MLC asked the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, representing the Minister for Health in the Legislative Council a question without notice concerning coal seam gas production in western Sydney. The Minister for Health has advised:

NSW Health has an advisory role when development applications submitted to the Department of Planning are available for comment. NSW Health ensures that the application contains a sufficiently detailed health risk assessment for a proper assessment of the risk to human health to be determined. For each major development application, NSW Health provides comment on the adequacy of the health risk assessment, the potential impacts on human health, and recommends requirements for the development to ensure public health, as appropriate.

In the event that evidence of the presence of pollutants at levels likely to affect human health arises, NSW Health works with Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to identify the type, source, potential exposure pathways and level of pollutant to assess human health risks from the identified pollutants. NSW Health has not been notified by OEH or EPA of any pollutants of concern associated with the AGL's existing Camden gas project.



Clerk of the Parliaments

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