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Extension welcome, but it does not protect us

Stop CSG Illawarra welcomes the NSW Government's decision to continue its freeze on new coal seam gas (CSG) exploration licence applications. In March this year, NSW Energy and Resources Minister Anthony Roberts announced the freeze, due to end tomorrow. Today's decision means the freeze will now remain in place for a further year. However, the limitations of this freeze must be outlined. Existing applications and licences remain in place, including those in the Illawarra. Jess Moore from Stop CSG Illawarra commented:

"It's important that this freeze remain in place and we welcome the Government's announcement.

"But the freeze doesn't go far enough. It does not cover existing licences and applications that put communities at risk.

"Existing CSG licences blanket the Illawarra region - licences that come with an obligation to drill.

"This freeze does nothing to change that fact.

"CSG mining always involves unearthing water that is high in salt and methane, and can contain toxic and radioactive compounds and heavy metals.

"CSG drilling in the Pilliga poisoned an aquifer with uranium.

"A freeze on all CSG licences is needed to investigate CSG and know if or under what conditions it is safe.

"A ban on CSG in drinking water catchments is needed.

"While the campaign to protect our drinking water has ensured a freeze on CSG development in our catchment, it is temporary.

"A precautionary approach and protection of our drinking water is just common sense."

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