

Natural Gas is NOT Evil, is NOT Bad for the Environment, is NOT an Ugly, Dirty Fossil Fuel

January 11, 2023

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For the first time in my career in the natural gas industry, I get a call from our GCUD Service Department Estimator, he had such concern in his voice, giving me a “heads up” about a response from a customer. The customer was wondering if she needed to cancel her order to install a new gas stove.... “since they are about to be ban them in the United States!”

In the land of the free, in the land where the pursuit of happiness and freedom of choice is part of the fundamental structure this great country of ours has been built on.... how is it I need to be given a “heads up” on such a ridiculous comment?

Wait! Wait! Wait!

In an interview with Bloomberg, a US Consumer Product Safety commissioner said gas stove usage is a “hidden hazard.”

“Any option is on the table. Products that can’t be made safe can be banned,” agency commissioner Richard Trumka Jr. told Bloomberg. The report said the agency plans “to take action” to address the indoor pollution caused by stoves.

New York CNN —

A federal agency is considering a ban on gas stoves, a source of indoor pollution linked to childhood asthma.

What! How can a government official make such a statement? Why did a government official make such a statement?

That report had the backing of RMI (formerly the Rocky Mountain Institute) and Rewiring America, two groups that are pushing for the conversion of gas to electric. (ETFirst ,Jan. 10, 2023, by Rachel Koning Beals)

But that’s NOT all, this discussion over natural gas has been going on for some time now....

The debate over proposals to limit the use of gas in homes because of its impact on climate change and public health has grown since 2019, when Berkeley became the first city in the country to ban gas hookups in most new homes and buildings. Since then, dozens of cities in California and across the country have enacted similar

ordinances that target not just gas stoves, but other appliances like gas-fired furnaces and water heaters.

*On Tuesday, Gov. Kathy Hochul of New York proposed that the legislature phase out the sale of fossil fuel heating equipment in existing residential buildings beginning in 2030 and require new residential and commercial buildings be all-electric by 2025 and 2030, respectively. (The New York Times **By Elena Shao and Lisa Friedman, Jan. 11, 2023)***

I want to set things straight and give everyone a “heads up” about the “REAL” natural gas story.

First about the news article and gas cook stoves-

The American Gas Association, the trade group representing gas utilities, has said that what it believes is a more robust study has not found a link between childhood asthma and gas stoves.

“According to the [2013] study Cooking Fuels and Prevalence of Asthma: A Global Analysis of Phase Three of the International Study of Asthma and Allergies in Childhood (ISAAC), which analyzed 512,707 primary- and secondary-school children from 108 centers in 47 countries, there is ‘no evidence of an association between the use of gas as a cooking fuel and either asthma symptoms or asthma diagnosis,’” said Richard Meyer, AGA’s vice president of energy markets, analysis and standards. “It is not clear why this study was excluded from the recent RMI/Rewiring America paper,” he added. (ETFirst, Jan. 10, 2023, by Rachel Koning Beals)

A White House spokesperson told CNN on Wednesday, “The President does not support banning gas stoves – and the Consumer Product Safety Commission, which is independent, is not banning gas stoves.” (CNN by Ramishah Maruf)

Sen. Joe Manchin, an energy-state Democrat. “The federal government has no business telling American families how to cook their dinner. I can tell you the last thing that would ever leave my house is the gas stove that we cook on,” Manchin tweeted.

Mike Sommers, the president of the American Petroleum Institute, said a ban on gas stoves was “not going to happen.” He predicted a backlash from homeowners across the country. Gas stoves are used in about 35 percent of households nationwide, or about 40 million homes.

“People love their gas stoves,” Mr. Sommers said.

A stream of Republican lawmakers attacked Mr. Trumka and the Biden administration on Twitter for even contemplating restrictions on gas stoves. “Unelected bureaucrats should not have the type of power to even consider such an action,” Representative Gary

Palmer, Republican of Alabama, wrote. "It is time to rein in the Biden administration and their continual desire to control American's lives and decisions."

*On his Fox News television show, Tucker Carlson featured a restaurateur who spoke about how his costs would go up and productivity go down by using electric stoves. "This will destroy our industry," the restaurant owner, Stratis Morfogen, said. (The New York Times, Jan. 11, 2023, **By Elena Shao and Lisa Friedman**)*

The "REAL" natural gas story continues...

DID YOU KNOW? *About cooking with natural gas...*

- *Natural gas cooking provides easy temperature control, quick heating, self-ignition, self-cleaning and reduced costs.*
- *Most professional chefs prefer natural gas stoves and/or gas grills as the premium option for cooking excellent food.*
- *Many natural gas appliances can work during a power outage. During a power outage, you'll still have natural gas coming to your home because your supplier will have backup generators maintaining service. You can continue using gas barbeques and gas stoves once you light them with a match.*
- *Gas-powered cooking is safe, efficient, and economical providing perks, like precise temperature control in cooking.*
- *National studies show that homeowners overwhelmingly prefer natural gas to electric for cooking.*

DID YOU KNOW? *About the Affordability of Natural Gas...*

- *Natural gas provides a reliable and cost-effective energy source for families throughout the country due to its abundance and the efficiency associated with direct use in the home.*
- *Households that use all-electric appliances pay almost \$900 a year more than those that have the traditional mix of natural gas and electric homes.*
- *Policy-driven electrification would increase the average residential household energy-related cost by between \$750 and \$910 per year, or about 38 to 46 percent.*
- *Seniors and low-income families would be impacted the most by the move to a higher-cost, all electric system.*
- *America's publicly owned gas utilities are stewards of their communities and the environment. As such, they are dedicated to keeping costs low for the citizens they serve through sustainable, responsible use of the resources allocated to them by local governments.*
- *To maintain affordability for citizens here at home and support our allies abroad, local, state, and federal officials must prioritize policies that support the U.S. natural gas supply chain, as well as invest in renewable natural gas (RNG) and hydrogen.*

DID YOU KNOW? About heating with natural gas...

- *A heating system can be a building's largest user of energy in many parts of the country, making it crucial that homes and businesses have access to the efficiency and reliability of natural gas.*
- *Natural gas continues to be the go-to heating source for most residential homes across the nation, particularly in colder regions.*
- *More than 56 million American homes choose to rely on natural gas as their primary energy source for efficient home heating.*
- *With regular maintenance, gas furnaces and boilers last longer than electric alternatives, meaning homeowners can reliably heat their homes without worrying about the lifespan of their home heating appliances.*
- *Natural gas heating systems deliver warmer air to homes than electric and other alternatives.*
- *Thanks to the trusted domestic natural gas delivery system and continuous technological innovations in natural gas furnaces and boilers, natural gas is an incredibly efficient way for Americans to heat their homes and businesses.*
- *Natural gas furnaces and gas-powered generators help ensure that crucial customers like hospitals, nursing homes and emergency response facilities stay warm and energized all year round.*

Natural gas is safe energy source for home use – in fact, it is used by more than half of American households as their main heating source. It is the cleanest-burning fossil fuel available, is efficient and has an excellent safety record due to the physical properties of the gas itself:

- *Natural gas has a very narrow range of flammability, which means it requires extremely specific conditions in order to burn. It also has a very high ignition temperature, at about 1,100 degrees Fahrenheit – almost twice the ignition temperature for gasoline.*
- *Natural gas is lighter than air, so it dissipates into the air rapidly, making accidental combustion difficult.*
- *Interestingly, although known for its “rotten egg” smell, natural gas is odorless when taken from the ground. Local utilities add a non-toxic chemical odorant called mercaptan to make leaks easy to detect by the distinct smell. However, there may be times when the smell of the odorant is weak or not present, even though there is a leak.*

These factors make accidental ignition or combustion of natural gas an unlikely event. (www.doinionenergy.com)

In a tweet by American Public Gas Association, Natural gas customers are 63X less likely to experience outages than all-electric neighbors? During stretches of extreme weather like this one, reliability offers a lifeline that policymakers should preserve in our energy future (1-11-23)

I hope this helps the American public understand more about natural gas.

Is it EVIL? No, without natural gas as an energy partner of electricity during this past December cold weather event, we would be still recovering from total black outs.... not just 15 minutes rolling black outs. GCUD did not lose a single natural gas customer during that weather event.

Is it BAD for the environment? No, The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency estimates that in 2020, methane emissions from natural gas and petroleum systems and from abandoned oil and natural gas wells were the source of about 33% of total U.S. methane emissions and **about 4% of total U.S. greenhouse gas emissions.** The clean burning properties of natural gas have contributed to increased natural gas use for electricity generation and as a transportation fuel for fleet vehicles in the United States.

Is it Ugly and Dirty? No, the EIA reported in 2020 natural gas consumption in the U.S. was 38% of total went for electric power and only 15% for residential use. Be very aware of where electricity to fuel the new electric vehicles comes from... nearly 40% from natural gas. Natural gas is the cleanest fossil fuel with 96% efficiency from the well head to the burner tip. Electricity has a 31% efficiency from the power plant to the outlet. Natural gas has many qualities that make it an efficient, relatively clean burning, and economical, environmentally safe energy source.

Natural gas is part of the solution for energy independence, national security, a reliable energy source for the entire nation, and for the comfort in your home... In the land of the free, in the land where the pursuit of happiness and freedom of choice is part of the fundamental structure this great country of ours has been built on.