

Archived: Tuesday, August 10, 2021 3:47:31 PM

From: [Steve Gelb](#)

Sent: Tuesday, August 10, 2021 3:34:21 PM

To: [City Council](#); [Clk](#)

Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments regarding Council Discussion of Prohibition of Fossil Fuels in New Construction

Sensitivity: Normal

Attachments:

[Emerald Cities - Shoreline Gas Transition Support - August 10.pdf](#) 

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Please accept the attached letter as comment on the council's Discussion of Prohibition of Fossil Fuels in New Construction at the meeting on August 16, 2021.

Thank you,

Steve Gelb

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Steve Gelb
Northwest Regional Manager

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August 10, 2021

Honorable Councilmembers,

Emerald Cities Collaborative strongly supports the prohibition of fossil fuels in new buildings, and we are pleased to see this topic up for discussion by the Shoreline City Council. It aligns with our mission to make our cities more sustainable and equitable.

We are all facing major climate change impacts including extreme heat, sea level rise, extreme rain events, and drought conditions. These impacts hit low- and moderate-income residents and communities of color disproportionately hard. We need to take bold action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG). Emissions from buildings are growing at a faster rate than any of other source of carbon pollution in Washington state, largely due to the use of natural gas (methane) for space heating, water heating, and cooking.

Gas also has major implications for the health and safety. According to the study “Health Effects from Gas Stove Pollution” published by the Rocky Mountain Institute, Physicians for Social Responsibility, Mothers Out Front, and Sierra Club in 2020, indoor air pollution from gas cooking exceeds EPA limits for outdoor air pollution. These impacts are felt disproportionately by frontline communities: Black, Latinx, and Asian residents, as well as low-income communities. Running gas through highly pressurized pipes also puts residents in danger of gas leaks and fires, like the gas explosion in Seattle’s Greenwood neighborhood in 2016 that leveled two buildings, impacted 36 business, created \$3 million of damage, and injured rescue workers.

Given the increasingly clean sources of electricity required under Washington’s 2019’s Clean Energy Transformation Act, building electrification will be the lowest-cost pathway to meeting our climate goals. Electric heat pump technology is highly energy-efficient and can provide air conditioning along with heating, which will be crucial to protect our communities from heat waves. Washington also requires electric utilities to provide financial support for low-income customers; there are no such protections for gas customers.

Thank you for your consideration of this issue. We hope that this discussion will lead to passing policies that require clean, safe, all-electric buildings in Shoreline.

Steve Gelb, NW Regional Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Gelb".

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