

5 August 2021

Submission to Victoria's Gas Substitution Roadmap

We strongly support the Victorian Government's target of reaching net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and the interim targets set for 2025 and 2030. It is our strong view that a transition away from natural gas is fundamental to the achievement of these targets.

In a residential setting this requires encouragement and support for customers to take a number of steps:

1. Electrify their homes by replacing their existing gas appliances with more efficient electric units; in particular this will apply to hot water, heating and cooking appliances
2. Install and/or upgrade renewable energy systems such as solar panels, battery storage
3. Adopt emerging technologies such as electric vehicles and vehicle to grid charging

The EnviroShop Newstead is actively involved with our customer base in central Victoria in all of these areas. As such the key issue that we would like to address is Issue 6.

While natural gas is currently an important fuel source in Victoria, especially in winter, gas has a number of disadvantages:

- It is a non-renewable fuel
- Our natural gas reserves in Bass Strait are dwindling
- Gas prices have increased substantially due to export pricing
- Gas appliances are less efficient and more reliant on existing technologies
- Older gas appliances (eg. heaters) can be dangerous
- Customers using gas and electricity will be paying two supply charges



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It is our contention that the Victorian government should actively encourage and support a transition away from residential gas consumption via electrification. A number of policies could be adopted to enable this transition, including:

1. Not mandating natural gas connections for new housing builds and suburbs
2. Providing up to date and accurate information re efficient electric appliances on Victorian government websites such as Sustainability Victoria, DELWP, Energy Victoria
3. Ensuring consistent messaging across Victorian government platforms
4. Working with the building industry to promote more energy efficient homes through improved standards in the National Construction Code
5. Improved training of architects and building designers to appreciate the benefits of all-electric homes and the availability of efficient appliances for heating, hot water and cooking
6. Education of local government planning officers to encourage efficient all-electric new builds
7. Development of case studies to showcase the transition from fossil fuels to efficient electric homes
8. Increased incentives for energy efficiency upgrades to existing building stock eg. Insulation, glazing
9. Increased incentives for upgrading the energy efficiency of tenanted properties
10. Ongoing support for the transition from gas appliances to efficient electric appliances for heating, hot water and cooking eg. VEU and Solar Victoria programs
11. Removal of impediments to abolishment of gas supply at existing properties eg. High charges from utility companies for gas meter abolishment
12. An annual roundtable with businesses in the energy efficiency sector and key stakeholders to discuss programs, outcomes and administration
13. Coordination with relevant industry groups such as Renew, the Institute for Sustainable Futures, the Green Building Council, the Melbourne Energy Institute etc.

We would be happy to expand on any of these points as part of the consultations being undertaken during this process.

Yours sincerely

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