

19 July 2021

Don Stokes

To whom it may concern,

Please accept my submission to Victoria's Gas Substitution Roadmap.

I applaud the efforts so far of the Victorian Government in reducing our collective carbon footprint, and note with disappointment the re-opening of gas drilling in Victoria.

Just a short note about my own efforts to reduce my carbon footprint;

I have radically reduced my gas consumption by replacing my gas heating with electric, and my gas oven with an electric oven.

I have a gas backed solar HWS because at the time it was the best technology, and gas cooktop because at the time convection was too expensive.

When I renovated my house, I installed as much North facing Double glazed glass as I could. This alone reduced the heating required for the house considerably, as well enhanced the liveability of the house.

I offer you this information as evidence that it is not that hard to live without domestic reticulated gas, that there is an important role in building design, and that with Government support and incentives, gas could be replaced very quickly.

I ask that, as you consider these submissions, you keep in mind the climate disasters that we have experienced over the last few years and that Australia is one of the most climate vulnerable countries in the world.

I also remind you of the BC town of Lytton, which has recently burned to the ground in record weather conditions as well as the recent freak floods in Germany, and the rapidly escalating examples of terrifying climate disasters around the world.

The 1.6 Billion clean energy transition allocation is a great start, but taken in context with what is at stake will need to be radically increased. For example, it is only 10% of the \$16 Billion cost the Government has budgeted for the emissions intensifying North East Link road expansion.

I encourage the Government to adopt short term targets for reduction in Victorian gas use, with a minimum 35% reduction by 2025 and 60% reduction by 2030.

This will entail implementation of key measures which have been identified by experts as reducing gas use most quickly such as incentives and planning measures to facilitate:

- Replacement of ducted gas heating
- Installing heat pump hot water
- Switching to heat pump space heating in commercial buildings
- Immediate planning law changes to prohibit gas to new buildings
- Best practice efficiency standards to reduce energy demand
- Prioritising solar thermal technology research and development for high process heat requirements and renewable energy and batteries for electrification
- Ensure that strong support is provided for low income and vulnerable Victorians to shift to cheaper, less polluting alternatives than gas

Some sectors of industry and Government are promoting technologies which are not backed by science, and that will not reduce emissions, such as;

- biomass and biomethane technologies that are risky for the climate and for biodiversity
- carbon capture and storage technology which has been tried and demonstrably failed as a means of abating carbon emissions at scale.
- so-called 'blue hydrogen' from methane gas which is a dirty fuel that has no future in a zero carbon world

I submit that any further gas developments or expansions in Victoria are counterproductive to this process. If domestic gas is radically reduced and shifting industry off gas is given priority, new gas is not necessary, and is not possible in consideration of the climate emergency.

Thankyou for considering my submission.

Don Stokes