



# Why Cities Are Banning Gas Stoves To Fight Climate Change

The irrational war on natural gas is driven by global warming hysteria but it is gaining ground all around the world. When burned, natural gas produces only water and carbon dioxide. Generating electricity to do the same work wastes energy. □ TN Editor

Ever since the [Green New Deal](#) became a key talking point and policy goal of progressive politicians last year, there's been a renewed push to make American homes and buildings better for the environment. For a growing number of municipalities and local leaders, part of the answer lies in shifting homes toward relying solely on electricity, instead of gas, for cooking, heating, and running appliances.

The current movement for U.S. municipalities to eliminate natural gas from homes first gained momentum in California. In 2018, the state's

then-governor, Jerry Brown, signed [a pair of laws](#) that funded research into reducing building emissions and [developing clean heating technology](#).

Last July, [Berkeley became the first U.S. municipality](#) to sign a law banning the installation of natural gas lines in new buildings. Since then, more than 20 other California cities have passed similar laws, and local and state governments across the country have begun considering similar laws as part of their strategies to cut building emissions. Maine passed a bill last June providing funding to [install new electric heat pumps in place of furnaces across the state](#), and [Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan said her city will unveil a plan in 2021 to make all new civic buildings fully electric](#).

“This is about what kind of technology can support the cities and homes that we want and need,” says Sage Welch, a spokesperson for the [Building Decarbonization Coalition](#).

Already a trend overseas, especially in Europe—Amsterdam plans to [completely eliminate domestic natural gas use by 2050](#)—building electrification appears to be catching on in the U.S. The trend comes right as a series of new building codes, such as those introduced by New York’s [Climate Mobilization Act](#), seek to cut emissions. But the switch also faces some significant headwinds, especially in the form of pushback from the natural gas industry, which is worried about future profits.

## **What’s the environmental impact of building electrification?**

Mandating that new buildings, and any large building retrofits, avoid or replace gas infrastructure and install all-electric appliances won’t completely eliminate the use of natural gas in homes anytime soon. But electrification is a great tool for those seeking to start cutting carbon emissions. Buildings account for [40 percent of the energy used in the United States](#), according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, and [39 percent of energy-related carbon emissions globally](#), according to the United Nations. The Rocky Mountain Institute estimates [70 million](#)

[American households and businesses burn natural gas, oil, or propane for heating alone, generating 560 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions a year](#), or a tenth of the nation's total emissions.

According to energy consulting firm E3, which receives part of its funding from utilities, if California as a whole adopted the standard of making all new and rebuilt buildings gas-free, [emissions from these buildings could be cut 90 percent by 2050](#).

It's important to note that building electrification won't clean up the emissions and other environmental impacts of generating electricity. Advocates note that it's as much about building the infrastructure for a zero-emission, renewable power system of the future as it is cutting out sources of carbon emissions now. The Sierra Club estimates that a third of the buildings in California that will exist in 2045 will be built between now and then; electrifying now will both cut emissions and help bolster the market for electric appliances.

Others say the building electrification push in California can also be a jobs creator. A UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation study, "[California Building Decarbonization Workforce Needs and Recommendations](#)," found that retrofitting all of California's buildings to be fully electric by 2045 could create more than 100,000 new jobs in construction, manufacturing, and energy, even after accounting for jobs lost in the gas industry. (It doesn't, however, note the carbon emissions generated by the retrofitting work itself.)

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