

## BEYOND GAS

# THE GREENS' PLAN FOR A FUTURE FREE FROM GAS POLLUTION



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Drilling for gas destroys our farmland and environment, and burning gas is wrecking our climate. Gas is also becoming more and more expensive. It is time for a planned transition Beyond Gas, to electricity fueled by 100 percent renewable energy.

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Household gas prices have risen by 180% and industrial prices by as much as 300%. Our gas was sold out of Australia so big companies could profit. We are all paying the environmental and financial cost for decades of government failure to manage the gas market.

Our communities and environment are facing a climate emergency and we must have a plan to phase out all fossil fuels, including gas.

Labor and the Liberals have no willingness to tackle gas and the damage it is causing. Labor has opened our pristine coasts for new gas exploration, is supporting a monster gas import ship in pristine Westernport Bay and the Liberals want to lift the onshore conventional gas ban.

The Greens have a plan to tackle gas and get it out of our energy system, to reduce power bills and protect our climate.

## OUR PLAN

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We will stop damaging gas activities in our state, while supporting existing gas users to transition to renewable based electricity for their energy needs.

Under our Beyond Gas plan, the Greens will:

- Revoke Labor's decision to allow offshore gas exploration within Victoria's jurisdiction
- Legislate to permanently ban any new gas exploration or extraction, including fracking, on Victorian land or in Victorian waters
- Stop AGL's Westernport gas facility and pipeline

- Run an education campaign about benefits of switching from gas to electric heating
- Provide \$1000 grants to support transition from gas to electric heating
- Develop recommendations for planning reform to stop new gas pipelines to new towns/suburbs
- Mandate non-gas heating in building regulations for all new builds
- Identify options for industry transition beyond gas, including use of biogas.

## TIME TO STOP NEW GAS

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Around 20% of Australia's energy in 2018 comes from gas, and we export huge quantities of our dirty gas to the rest of the world. Around 80% of the gas produced in Australia is exported.

Like coal, gas is a fossil fuel and it is destroying our climate.

Yet because it is marginally less polluting than coal, gas has been given less attention in policy plans to transition our energy systems away from fossil fuels. It's time that changed.

The first place to start in delivering a future Beyond Gas is to stop new investment in this damaging and polluting energy source. The Greens will do this by stopping all new gas exploration and extraction.

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### No fracking and no onshore gas

The fracking ban and moratorium on onshore gas mining were huge wins for Victorian communities. But already, gas companies are lining up to challenge the temporary onshore conventional gas ban. The Liberals want to lift it and Labor is refusing to make a commitment to extend it. We need to legislate to make this ban permanent, so that future governments can't be pressured by mining companies to open up our farmlands and parks to gas drilling.

### No offshore gas exploration

Earlier this year, Labor announced it would allow new gas exploration in Victoria's pristine coastal waters. The bidding process for these rights is still underway and it's not too late to put a stop to this terrible concession to big fossil fuel companies. We absolutely should not be looking for new gas. Our climate cannot cope with the dirty fossil fuels already being extracted, let alone more destructive carbon pollution. We must stop looking for new gas, especially with alarming new research emerging that shows gas exploration is destroying marine life and our fisheries.

### No to AGLs monster gas ship

AGL has jumped on high gas prices and is looking to make a quick buck. They want to build a monster floating gas ship in pristine Westernport Bay, feeding dirty gas up a new pipeline and into Victoria. This proposal would have huge environment impacts for the surrounding marine and coastal environment and cause carbon pollution we simply cannot afford. The Greens will stand with the local community and environment groups to fight this proposal.

## HOUSEHOLD GAS IS A BAD OPTION

Since gas first started appearing in Australian homes in the 1950s and 60s, it has gone from being relatively cheap to very expensive.

Recent studies published by the University of Melbourne found that a large Melbourne home could save as much as \$658 over the course of a single winter heating season, by switching from gas to electric heating.

Its cost, combined with its climate pollution, make gas a bad option. Electricity made from renewable sources is a much better option, for the environment and the household budget.

This is why the Greens will fund a \$3 million education program to help households understand how switching from gas to electricity in their homes can help the climate and their budget. The Greens will also provide \$1000 grants to help households make the switch.

Despite overwhelming evidence that gas is no longer a good option in Australian homes, big companies are still rolling out new gas pipelines to housing estates across Victoria. They know that once the pipelines exist and homes are fitted with gas appliances, families will be trapped into buying expensive and polluting gas for years to come.

The Greens plan to tackle this by developing recommendations for planning reform, to prevent new gas roll outs. We will also make changes to building regulations to require that non-gas heating is installed in all new homes.

## SUPPORTING INDUSTRY TRANSITION

The Greens will support industry to make the transition to alternative energy sources. The Greens will identify opportunities for Biogas from agriculture and the waste sector to supply gas users where alternative energy options are not available.

## HOW MUCH WILL IT COST

The cost to deliver our Beyond Gas initiative is \$25 million. This cost is made up of:

- \$3 million to run a household gas to electric education program
- \$1000 grants for landlords and owner-occupiers to replace dirty polluting gas heaters, capped at \$22 million.