

20 May 2022

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## Cooking With Gas Not A Healthy Choice

Gas cooking has benefitted from such good publicity that the phrase “now we’re cooking with gas” has been integrated into everyday life. However, scientists are now so concerned with the health impacts stemming from cooking and heating with gas that they’re recommending people switch over to electric cooking and heating and are also calling on governments to help make this transition easier.

In a newly released position paper from the Centre for Air pollution, energy and health Research (CAR)- *The health impacts of gas use and extraction*- scientists have outlined how household gas use for cooking and heating produces a variety of air pollutants that affect lung health, especially for those with asthma.

Professor Graeme Zosky, Chief Investigator of CAR and Deputy Director of the University of Tasmania’s Menzies Institute for Medical Research warns of the dangers of gas in households.

“Marketing campaigns have promoted the idea that cooking with gas isn’t only the most efficient way of cooking, but that gas is a clean way to cook and heat homes. In reality, gas use in the home worsens air quality and this has impacts on people’s health, in particular their respiratory health”.

“We have previously shown that approximately 12 per cent of childhood asthma can be attributed to gas cooking stoves. That is a huge number when we consider that Australia has around 460,000 children with asthma”.

“We know there are a variety of steps people can take to minimise the risk to their health when it comes to gas use inside the home, including improved ventilation and replacing your gas appliances with electric ones”.

In light of this, CAR researchers are calling on governments to provide incentives to help people to replace their gas appliances with electric appliances including in rental properties. These include subsidy schemes for low-income households. They’re also calling on governments to introduce policies to ensure better ventilation of homes with a focus on social housing and rentals and the introduction of a national indoor air quality framework.

“Incentives should also be provided to allow schools, workplaces and residential aged care facilities to monitor their air quality and meet these new indoor standards,” Professor Zosky said.

*The Centre for Air pollution, energy and health Research (CAR) is an NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence that brings together experts studying the links between air pollution, energy transitions and our health. We are a virtual centre and are based in most Australian capital cities. Our researchers are at the cutting edge of science and come from a variety of*

fields. Our vision is for a healthier community through cleaner air and cleaner energy sources.



Centre for Air pollution, energy and health Research

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