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Guelph, ON
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March 21, 2024

Mayor Guthrie and Guelph City Councillors,

I ask you to support Councillor Caron's motion to support the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) decision to end the subsidization of fossil gas. Like many issues there are numerous factors to be considered: alignment with our City's Community Energy Initiative (CEI), our Official Plan and our District Energy Strategic Plan, alignment with reduction of fossil fuel use across Canada/Globally, the financial pathway of different scenarios and "business as usual?" or are we in a "climate emergency?", to name a few.

As a homeowner, I am reducing the use of gas in my home as fast as I can afford to. I am completely puzzled why some think it's a good idea to install this dated system into new developments. I appreciate this is a disappointment to gas companies, they will have a reduced customer base available to subsidize gas infrastructure as families eliminate gas from their homes. Since much of the public conversation is centred around "affordability", this seems like a good place to land.

Every gas customer currently pays for new gas infrastructure. On December 21/23 the OEB questioned the financial sense of asking current customers to invest in a system that's on a "death spiral" and moved forward to put a halt to this practise for new developments. As less and less gas is used in our Province, those who can't afford to switch to cleaner home heating and appliances will be left paying more for the same gas delivery system. Delivery will become less, and less "affordable" and greener energy options will prove to be an even greater investment. "Business as usual", builds in inequity and hurts the ones who can least afford it the most.

There are better more efficient ways to heat homes/ hot water and cook now. Why shackle new homeowners to a dinosaur, rather than encourage developers to build using a higher standard of insulation and install the heat pump right from the beginning. This makes energy more "affordable" and a great reason to move into a new home in Guelph.

Please be assured, no matter what is decided, the cost will be passed along to the consumer. This is one thing we can be sure of, so let's plan to get the best bang for our energy buck, which will also be more "affordable", give us cleaner air, create new green energy jobs, leaves fossil fuel in the ground, allows us to get closer to our GHG target and show the youth we care!

With all due respect
Karen Rathwell

PS. I have added these links for easy access to further information

https://guelph.ca/wp-content/uploads/011514_DistrictEnergyStrategicPlan_web.pdf

<https://globalnews.ca/news/10310705/ontario-overrule-independent-energy-board-natural-gas/>

https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/as-kids-battle-dread-over-climate-change-shes-helping-them-navigate-healthy-responses-to-a/article_bab15744-baf2-11ee-a3d2-db9afe2e45b4.html

https://www.thestar.com/business/what-you-need-to-know-about-heat-pumps/article_0770eb95-d26c-5f51-b3e8-fde51c40d916.html