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*By Marcy Franck*

It's 2006. I'm deep in the throes of an obsession with home makeover shows, and I'm ready to move in with my husband-to-be. Our new home probably won't have the fancy granite countertops or stainless steel appliances that I covet, but it will most certainly have a gas stove, thank you very much.

The flames, so primal! The knobs, so hefty! The grill top, *so sophisticated*.

Everywhere we've lived since those early days of fossil-fueled domestic bliss has had a gas stove. But I'm rethinking the smug meals I've prepared on them, because I've been bamboozled into thinking they are the height of function and elegance, and that they run on "clean" natural gas.

But gas stoves are to the modern American kitchen as long cigarettes are to actresses with unplaceable European accents in black-and-white movies: Long on style, short on health.

Until now, little was known about what chemicals zipped through pipelines criss-crossing the country into our homes. Our research released today—*Home is Where the Pipeline Ends*—is the first to look at the chemical makeup of "natural" gas in homes, and found **21 chemicals designated as hazardous by EPA**, some of which are linked to asthma, cancer, and poor birth outcomes. We also learned that small leaks can be undetectable by smell and concentrations are 8x higher in winter vs. summer.

Previous research found that gas stoves can leak toxic chemicals into our homes even when they are off, and even if they run for just a few minutes. Other research found that kids who live with gas stoves are 42% more likely to develop childhood asthma, and the

[American Medical Association](#) has just started raising public awareness. Earlier this year, experts recommended requiring [warning labels](#) on gas stoves.

Now I'm thinking back to my son's childhood asthma with a giant, uncomfortable question mark: Not only did I use our stove with wild abandon, but I didn't turn on the exhaust fan because it was loud and cooking to 70's soft rock sparks joy. Though it's impossible to pinpoint the cause, I still wish I'd known.

But big problems come with big solutions. In this issue we'll explore what we can do to protect our health and explore initiatives that will help speed up the transition to healthier, greener living.

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## SIMPLE ACTIONS CAN REDUCE HEALTH RISKS

*Easy, like Sunday morning.*



- **If you have an exhaust fan:** Always use it, make sure it vents outside, and turn it on *\*before\** cooking. The vent is more efficient if you cook on the back burners. Bring in fresh air by opening a window.
- **If you don't:** Opening a window will help pollutants escape.
- **When it's time to replace your stove, go electric:** Stoves can be expensive, but you can find a portable induction cooktop for [under \\$50](#). Canary Media [tested](#) one so you don't have to.
- **If you can't replace your stove,** rely more on electric appliances like a microwave or toaster oven. Ever make tater tots in a [waffle iron](#)? You're welcome.

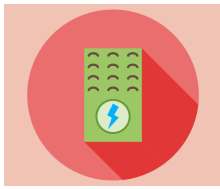
**Who is most at risk?** People unable to fix or replace their stoves due to cost or rental agreements; those with a decreased sense of smell or heart or lung conditions; and restaurant workers who have higher exposures at work.

Tune in [Thursday at 10:00 AM EDT](#) to a Twitter Space hosted by *The Boston Globe* to learn more and ask the authors questions about our study. Brush up on the finer details in this [great explainer](#) from *Inside Climate News*.

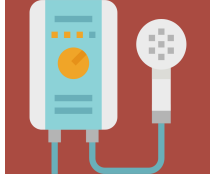
Become a climate-conscious cook with the [EcoKitchen](#) newsletter or [Cooked: The search for sustainable eats](#).

## HOME EFFICIENCY IS HAVING A MOMENT

*Did I ever think I'd read rules and regulations about the machines we hide in our basements with the same verve I have for watching home makeovers? No. But home systems are electrifying!*



**Furnaces:** A new federal rule aims to [phase out](#) residential furnaces that waste natural gas. And more homes heated with [electricity instead of gas](#) for the first time in 2020.



**Water heaters:** As the least sexy appliance, they sure take a lot of energy to get hot. So California is testing smart electric water heaters' ability to [bolster the grid](#) and the DOE proposed [efficiency standards](#) in commercial buildings.



**Heat pumps:** They heat *and* cool your home, and save up to \$500/year in utility bills. The DOE just announced a [breakthrough in heat pumps made in America](#) that work efficiently at -10°F, along with a plan to offer customer incentives in 2024. 🤖



**Small-scale solar is boosting climate goals** in [New England \(\\$\)](#), [Puerto Rico](#), [Hawaii \(\\$\)](#), and [Spain](#), and some of us will be able to buy panels at Ikea this fall. Hot dang, I hope they call them [GLITTER](#) and include a big enough monkey wrench.



**Pro tips:** Use [this database](#) to see what clean energy incentives are available in your area, or check out eight ways [renters](#) can make their homes greener.

## BIG-DEAL GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

*For that feeling Fixer-Upper couples get when they really love their reno reveal.*

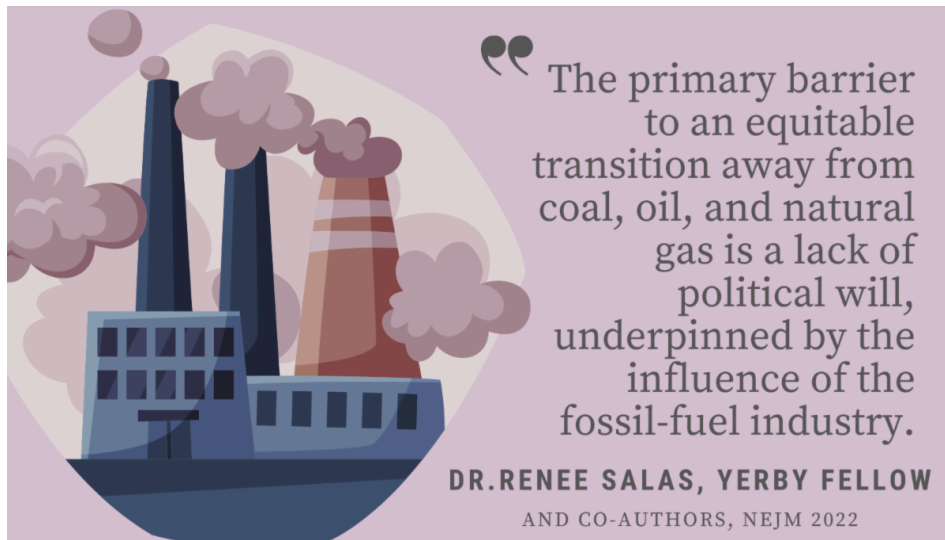


**Electrification programs:** [60+ jurisdictions in 11 states](#) require all-electric appliances in new construction. Could your town be next?

**Building Codes:** A [new national initiative](#) will help state and local governments adopt the latest building codes to make communities climate resilient and save households ~\$162/year.

**Manufacturing clean energy like our lives depend on it:** The White House invoked a [wartime law](#) to boost solar panels, heat pumps, insulation, and parts for our power grid. Now we're on track to triple our solar manufacturing by 2024—enough to power 3.3M homes every year.

## UPDATES FROM OUR TEAM



The *New England Journal of Medicine* took the [unusual step to weigh in on climate change](#), launching a series to raise awareness about the connections between climate change and health. Our Yerby Fellow Dr. Renee Salas co-authored an [editorial](#) to announce the series.

With **record-breaking heat waves gripping the nation**, our Director Dr. Aaron Bernstein spoke to the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences about [how healthcare providers can protect](#) those most likely to suffer by creating patient-centered climate resilience strategies.

We're excited about Harvard's new [Salata Institute for Climate and Sustainability!](#) We look forward to working with them to advance the network of climate-focused researchers across all of Harvard's Schools.

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