



COOKING WITH SMOKE: HOW THE GAS INDUSTRY USED TOBACCO TACTICS TO COVER UP HARMS FROM GAS STOVES

TODAY'S SPEAKERS



Joelle Lester, J.D.



Jamie Long, J.D.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH LAW CENTER



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WHAT WE DO



Improving health through the power of law:

- Eliminate commercial tobacco
- Promote healthy food & physical activity
- Support Tribal public health policy
- Advance climate justice

LEGAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

-  Legal Research
-  Policy Development, Implementation, Defense
-  Publications
-  Trainings
-  Direct Representation
-  Lobby

EQUALITY:

Everyone gets the same – regardless if it's needed or right for them.



EQUITY:

Everyone gets what they need – understanding the barriers, circumstances, and conditions.



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WEBINAR OVERVIEW

- Health Harms from Burning Tobacco and Gas
- What the Industries Knew
- The Coverups and Deceptive Campaigns
- Policy Solutions

GAS APPLIANCES AND HEALTH



**Gas
Stove
Pollution**



Nitrogen dioxide
Carbon monoxide
Benzene
Particulate matter
Formaldehyde

**Cigarette
Smoke**



Nitrogen dioxide
Carbon monoxide
Benzene
Particulate matter
Formaldehyde
Lead
Cadmium

The Health Harms



Nitrogen dioxide is a byproduct of combustion that contributes to increased asthma attacks, inflammation of the airways, worsened cough and wheezing, reduced lung function, and greater likelihood of emergency department and hospital admissions.



Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas that is highly dangerous. Carbon monoxide poisoning can be deadly, yet 95% of CO poisonings are nonfatal. These lower level, chronic exposures are harmful to human health, and will not always be captured by a standard detector, which are designed as “lifesaving devices.”



Benzene is a volatile organic compound and a known carcinogen. According to the World Health Organization, there is no safe level of benzene exposure.

NO2 AND KIDS

- 42% increased risk of asthma symptoms for kids in homes with gas stoves
- Gas stoves responsible for 12.7% of U.S. childhood asthma cases
- Similar to asthma risk of kids living with a smoker

Three Main Factors Why Children Are More Susceptible to Illnesses Associated with Air Pollution than Adults



Source: [RMI \(2020\)](#)

Lower-income Households May be at a Higher Risk of Exposure to Gas Stove Pollution

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO HIGHER LEVELS OF NO₂ IN HOMES:



Smaller unit size



More people per home



Older homes, inadequate ventilation



Using the stove/ oven for supplemental heat



Higher exposure to outdoor pollution



Greater asthma burden

RMI – Energy. Transformed.

<https://rmi.org/insight/gas-stoves-pollution-health/>

BENZENE POLLUTION RESEARCH

California Study (2022)

- Gas leakage from stoves and ovens not in use can result in indoor benzene concentrations **comparable to secondhand tobacco smoke**
- Exceeding health standards

Stanford Study (2023)

- Found benzene in all stoves tested across California
- 45 minutes of a burner or oven at 350 degrees > standards
- Benzene **exceeded secondhand smoke levels** in some cases



Particulate matter is produced both by burning fossil fuels and by burning tobacco, and contributes to serious health harms including cardiovascular disease, respiratory disease, and lung cancer. Cooking food itself produces some particulate matter emissions – a fact the gas industry often raises – gas stoves emit particle pollution even without cooking food. Particulate matter pollution from cooking food on gas stoves can be twice as high as from electric stoves.



Formaldehyde is a volatile organic compound and a known carcinogen.

HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS



American Medical Association



AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION
For science. For action. For health.



WHAT THE INDUSTRIES KNEW

Tobacco

- Researchers knew smoking caused cancer as early as 1928
- By the 1960s, internal documents show tobacco companies own researchers admitted cancer relationship

Gas

- Researchers found health impacts from gas appliances in 1970s
- By the 1980s, gas industry knew of indoor air pollution harm from gas appliances

WHAT THE INDUSTRIES KNEW

Tobacco

R.J. Reynolds scientist (1962):

“The results of 34 different statistical studies show that cigarette smoking increases the risk of developing lung cancer. Many authorities believe the relationship to be one of cause-and-effect.”

Gas

American Gas Assn. exec (2020):

“[G]as cooking does generate indoor air emissions of contaminants ... [I]t’s not an issue that’s going to be easy to paper over, because... these products do have emissions.”

Deceptive Practice	Tobacco Industry	Gas Industry
Misleading PR campaigns	✓	✓
Funding research	✓	✓
Avoiding safer product design	✓	✓
Front groups and astroturfing	✓	✓
Driving racial wedges	✓	✓
Preempting local public health efforts	✓	✓
Suing local governments	✓	✓

PR CAMPAIGNS & MARKETING TO KIDS

Tobacco

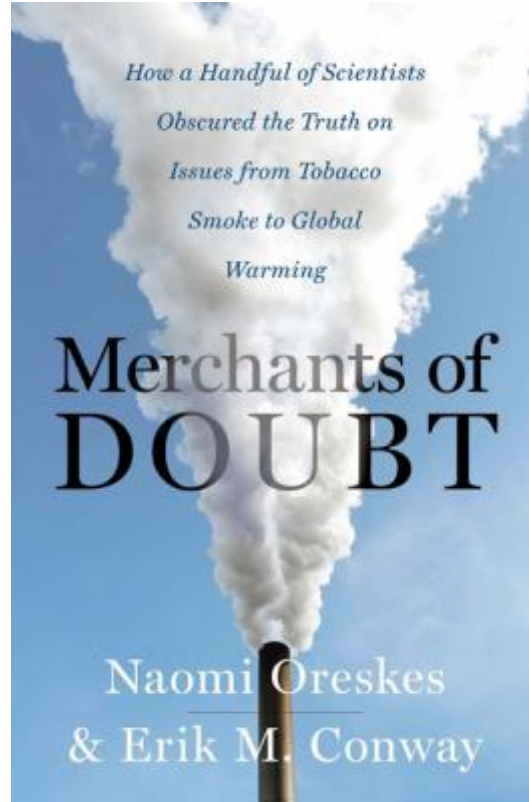


Gas



FUNDING BIASED RESEARCH

Tobacco



Gas

The New York Times

In the Fight Over Gas Stoves, Meet the Industry's Go-To Scientist

Longstanding research shows the health dangers of gas-burning ranges. Utilities are turning to Julie Goodman, a toxicologist with a firm whose work raises questions about the science.

AVOIDING SAFER PRODUCT DESIGN

Tobacco



Gas

Infrared Gas Stove



Low carbon clean combustion technology
Save gas costs about 50EURO a year



Humanized design , the little red riding hood warn consumers against the high temperature

Fully mixing gas and oxygen
Saving energy above 40%
CO/NOX emissions ≈ 0



Taper knob design, concise and fashion, it is easier to clean the stains of panel .

concentrated more than 7000 honeycomb holes on a 200 square centimeter ceramic piece, more intense combustion, inhibiting the production of harmful gas.

FRONT GROUPS & RACIAL WEDGES

Tobacco

Tobacco industry has fueled false claims that eliminating menthol cigarettes will put Black Americans at greater risk from law enforcement

Nov. 09, 2023 | 3 min read

Gas

HEATED

Fossil fuel industry infiltrates civil rights convention

Al Sharpton invited methane representatives to his National Action Network convention, where they fear-mongered attendees about renewables.



ARIELLE SAMUELSON AND EMILY ATKIN
APR 16, 2024

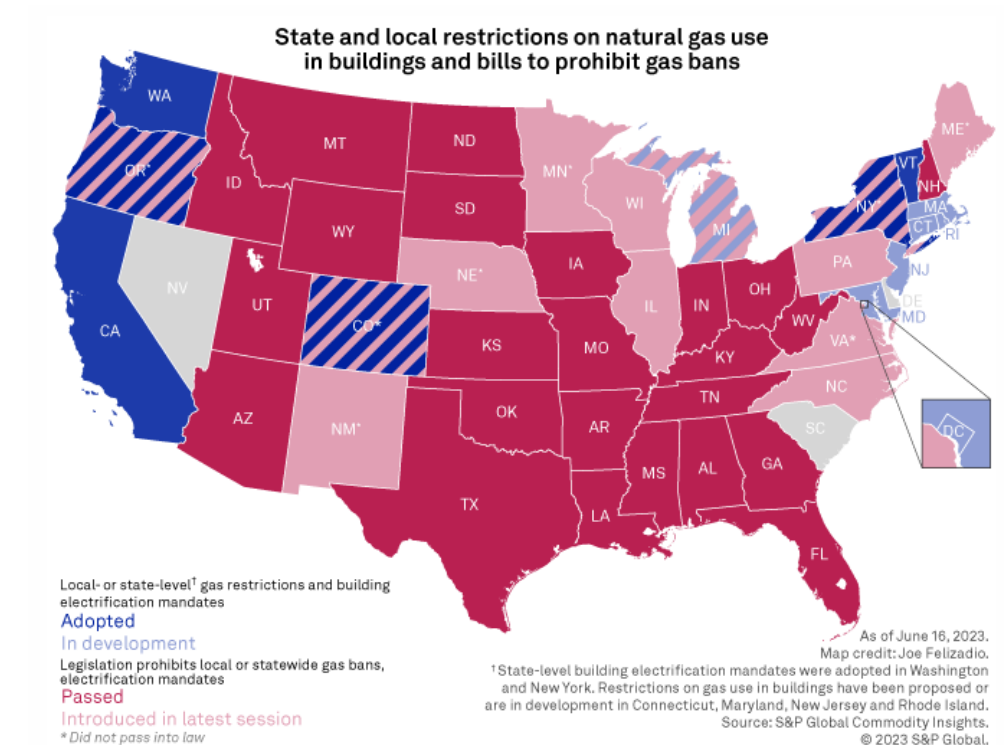
PREEMPTION & ANTI-HEALTH LAWSUITS

Tobacco

“While we’re not married to any particular form of preemption language, we’re dead serious about achieving preemption in all 50 states.”

– Phillip Morris government affairs director

Gas



HUD PETITION

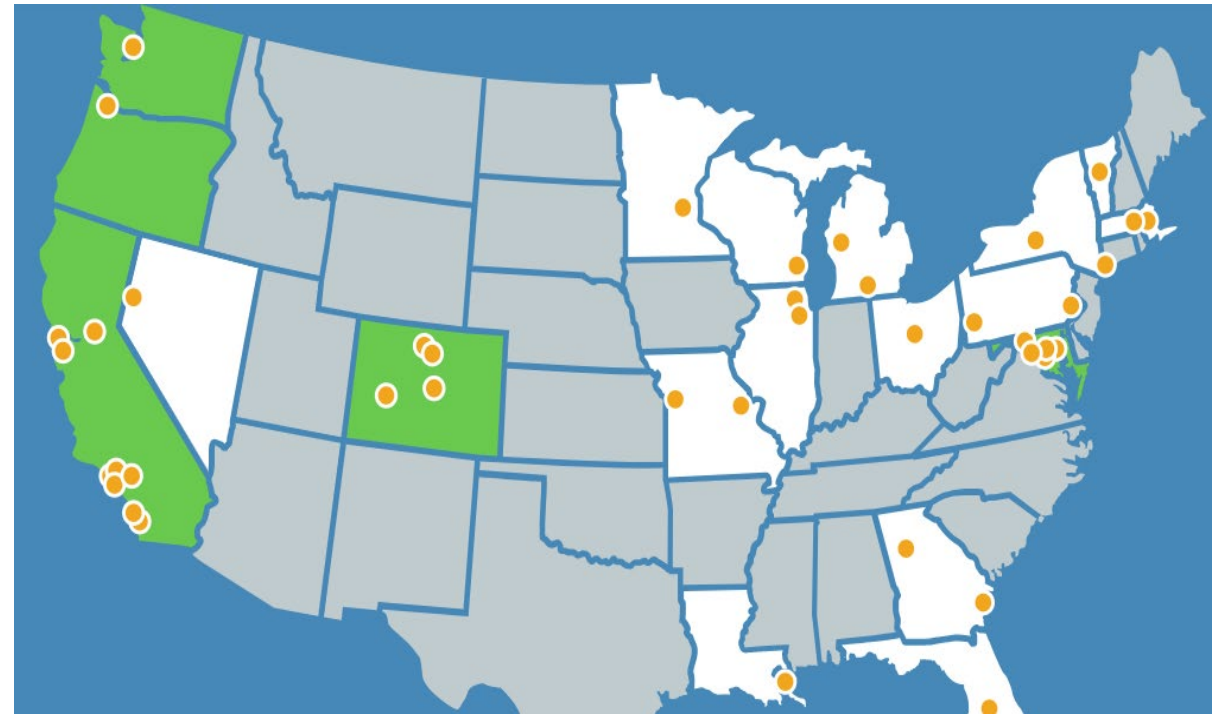
- Petitioned HUD in October 2022 to phase out gas appliances
- HUD obligations:
 - “free of hazardous materials [and] toxic chemicals and gasses.”
 - “decent, safe, sanitary and in good repair”



BUILDING PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

WHAT IS A BPS?

- Set targets for existing buildings to reduce energy use or GHG emissions by set deadlines
- Adopted by 4 states (CO, OR, MD, WA)
 - Commitments from 8 more:
(CA, CT, HI, MA, ME, NY, PA, RI)
- 8 Cities/ Counties: Denver, St Louis, Boston, Washington D.C., NYC



OTHER ELECTRIFICATION POLICY OPTIONS

- **All electric new construction** – nearly 100 cities require
 - Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Denver, San Francisco, Washington D.C.
- **Updated building codes**
 - Prescriptive or performance requirements
- **Clean heat standards**
- **Target air emissions**
 - e.g. NYC's approach limiting carbon dioxide emissions from new buildings
- **Target gas infrastructure**



[See Our Event Page](#)

Tags

Press Release | September 2023

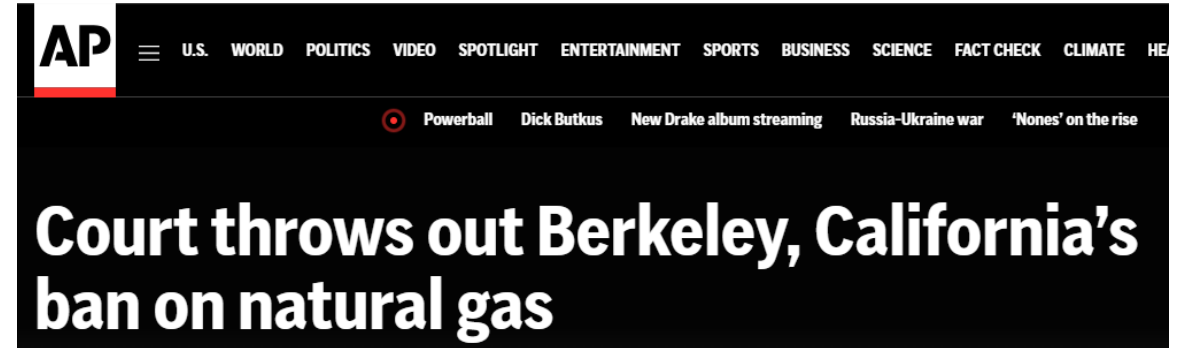
U.S. Climate Alliance Announces New Commitments to Decarbonize Buildings Across America, Quadruple Heat Pump Installations by 2030

September 21, 2023

NEW YORK, NY – The U.S. Climate Alliance, a bipartisan coalition of 25 governors representing approximately 60 percent of the U.S. economy and 55 percent of the U.S. population, today announced a series of new commitments from its members to eliminate emissions from buildings, including collectively quadrupling heat pump installations by the end of the decade.

WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

- Preemption questions
- Assessing policy options by jurisdiction
- Legal technical assistance on ordinance design



CONTACT US



651.290.7506



publichealthlawcenter@mitchellhamline.edu



www.publichealthlawcenter.org



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