

Dear Mayor and Council,

Okanagan Climate Hub's (non-exhaustive) response to the [FortisBC Energy Transition Plan](#) is as follows:

- We reject the recommendation on P11: Recognize renewable gas as a low-carbon energy system in the same fashion as electricity and ensure policy frameworks continue to provide a role for gas in buildings.
- The statement on P10 that Fortis can provide 100% RNG to all new homes is a myth.

This is false. There are no separate gas lines for RNG. **Fortis cannot assign RNG molecules to specific dwellings**. Rather, any RNG produced or purchased by Fortis enters the same gas line system as the rest of the natural gas burned in homes. Fortis may wish to claim that new buildings will be supplied 100 per cent with renewable gas, but this is a deceit — under their plan, the gas that enters a new home will be no different from the gas that enters an older home next door.

– We strongly recommend implementing a Climate Action task force. Without one, there is no way to provide a thorough assessment of the FortisBC presentation or future items that come before council concerning emissions reduction and climate action.

– We support the [C40 NA mayors' response to wildfires and air quality](#) and their call on all governments, companies, and residents to act with them. We urge Kelowna to act with them, given that our city is even more vulnerable to and frequently impacted by climate events such as wildfires.

– June 8, 2023 Victoria Councillor Dave Thompson [tweeted](#): Victoria Council voted to explore and test incentives to remove methane ("natural gas") heating from multifamily residential buildings. Buildings & transport cause 90% of local GHG emissions. BC's clean electricity is how we will decarbonize these [sectors].

We urge Kelowna to follow Victoria's example.

– Overheating is being added to the BC Building Code, with an indoor temperature target. In the 6-page [PDF](#), one of the key changes to the wording throughout is that **air-conditioning** (2020 National Building Code content) be removed and replaced with **cooling** (proposed BC specific content.)

This signals a change towards electrification. Electricity generates fewer carbon emissions and, unlike gas, can be used both to heat and cool homes. As climate change threatens more extreme, hot weather, those dual functions are poised to make them more appealing than gas.

- We remind you Kelowna’s economy is impacted negatively by not phasing out fossil fuels. Two years ago, BC’s public safety minister issued a [directive against travel to the Okanagan](#). Tourist dollars will not flow into the city if climate disasters continue due to our inaction.
- The April 2023 [article](#) “Is FortisBC Misrepresenting the Promise of RNG to Block All Electric Buildings?” covers the misrepresentations by FortisBC regarding methane (renewable natural) gas.
- [Canada marks Clean Air Day with worst air quality in the world as wildfires rage.](#)

Essentially, our recommendation is that instead of continuing to expand our gas network and increasing the risks associated with burning and leaking methane gas, we should:

1. Immediately cap any expansion of our gas pipeline network;
2. Knowing RNG is not expected to meet even existing needs, incentivize the transition to the much cleaner electrical grid like other cities in BC and across North America are doing.
3. Implement a climate action task force to provide thorough assessments of items coming before council.

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Okanagan Climate Hub respectfully acknowledges the careful stewardship of the unceded and ancestral land, waters, and territory of the Syilx/Okanagan people.