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## **Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities Opens Investigation Into Future of the Gas Industry in Massachusetts**

**BOSTON, MA --**

The Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities has opened a [docket](#) to explore the future of gas use in buildings in response [to a petition filed by Attorney General Maura Healey](#) in June. The petition from the Attorney General's office aimed to bring the DPU's gas regulatory practice into alignment with the targets of the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act.

Methane, which is the main ingredient of gas, has 84 times the climate impacts of CO<sub>2</sub> in the first two decades after its release into the atmosphere. With Massachusetts' gas currently supplying the majority of residential heating, this docket is seen as a necessary step to plan for an equitable transition of the buildings sector from fracked gas to clean, renewable energy. As most new buildings in Massachusetts are built to use gas for heating and hot water, annual greenhouse gas emissions from the buildings sector continue rising.

### **Massachusetts Sierra Club Chapter Director Deb Pasternak issued the following statement:**

"We are glad to see the DPU take this necessary step towards planning the state's transition off of dirty and unsafe gas heating and are looking forward to working with DPU and the utilities to ensure a robust stakeholder and public engagement process that prioritizes the health, safety, and pocketbooks of Massachusetts residents.

However, in terms of timeline, we believe that by March of 2022, the DPU and gas utilities should already have implemented the first phase of this work - which is to stop adding new gas heating capacity, and to routinely perform cost benefits analyses on electrification versus all gas pipeline repairs."

### **About Sierra Club:**

The Sierra Club is America's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, with more than 3.5 million members and supporters. In addition to helping people from all backgrounds explore nature and our outdoor heritage, the Sierra Club works to promote clean



energy, safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and legal action. For more information, visit [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org).

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