



# SIERRA CLUB

LOMA PRIETA CHAPTER

San Mateo, Santa Clara & San Benito Counties

August 1, 2022

Gilroy City Council  
7351 Rosanna Street  
Gilroy, CA 95020

**RE: Agenda Item 11.4: Please Pass a Motion for an All-Electric Municipal Code and MWENDO Analysis**

Dear Mayor Blankley and Gilroy City Councilmembers,

The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter is in support of the strongest possible all-electric building code in Gilroy. Unfortunately, Gilroy is falling behind other Bay Area cities in climate policy. The currently proposed mixed-fuel codes could burden residents with new gas pipelines that threaten public health, our climate, and increase building costs.

- 1) We ask that the City Council pass a motion directing staff to pursue the Natural Gas Ban, listed as Option 3 in the staff report.** Staff should be directed to use the “Bay Area Reach Codes Model All-Electric Municipal Code” as a model for Gilroy’s reach code. The natural gas ban is the ideal policy vehicle for all-electric requirements, as these requirements will not need to be revisited every 3 years during each building code cycle.
- 2) We also ask that the City Council pass a motion directing staff to contact Valley Water to seek the technical assistance they offer for implementing measures within the Model Water Efficiency New Development Ordinance.** Valley Water has already analyzed Gilroy’s water policies and can identify gaps where new measures can be implemented.

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All-Electric buildings are cheaper to build, have healthier indoor air quality, and are supplied with clean electricity from Silicon Valley Clean Energy

Indoor air pollution from gas stoves is a significant health hazard and equity issue. “UCLA researchers found that after cooking for one hour with a gas stove and oven, peak levels of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) inside the kitchen are so high they exceed both state and national outdoor acute air-quality standards in more than 90 percent of the homes modeled.”<sup>1</sup> The report

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<sup>1</sup><https://www.sierraclub.org/articles/2020/04/pollution-gas-appliances-endangers-our-health-going-electric-can->

also identifies that children, the elderly, and low income people are at most risk of air pollution from gas appliances. A home without gas appliances is a healthier home.

No new pipelines. All-Electric Homes provide significant cost and climate benefits

Due in part to forgoing the installation of gas pipelines, all-electric buildings are cheaper to build than mixed-fuel buildings. Furthermore, gas pipelines consistently leak greenhouse gasses into our atmosphere, and into our homes. These emissions, called 'fugitive emissions' have been measured at more than 9%<sup>2</sup>. These leaks have been historically under-counted. Fugitive leaks have been found to be a significant source of emissions, making "natural" fossil gas worse than coal in terms of greenhouse gas emissions.

Every New Gas Pipeline is a Liability

Gas has no future in society. Carbon neutrality cannot be achieved while fossil gas pipelines continue to operate and leak below our feet and in our homes. Many cities, including San Jose, Morgan Hill, San Mateo, Cupertino and Santa Clara have not only adopted all-electric new building codes, but are already exploring measures for the decarbonization of existing buildings.

Every gas pipeline that Gilroy builds will become a cost and climate liability for the City. It would be tragic to allow the construction of infrastructure that we know today to be unnecessary, costly, unhealthy and dangerous.

Sincerely,



Dashiell Leeds  
Conservation Organizer  
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter



Gladwyn d'Souza  
Conservation Committee Chair  
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

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<https://www.nature.com/articles/493012a#:~:text=Losses%20of%20up%20to%209,US%20gas%20industry's%20environmental%20impact.&text=That%20figure%20is%20nearly%20double,in%20Utah%20than%20in%20Colorado>