



Yes, Electric Buildings are a Good Thing

Last April, the UCLA School of Public Health issued the report [*Effects of Residential Gas Appliances on Indoor and Outdoor Air Quality and Public Health in California*](#), commissioned by the Sierra Club, just in time to weigh in on the protracted dust-up over the efforts by the City of SLO to promote all-electric buildings in new construction.

The report concludes that phasing out gas appliances and using advanced electric appliances will reduce hazardous air pollution (CO, NOx, NO2, fine particulate matter and formaldehyde) and improve public health, resulting in at least 350 fewer premature deaths annually and \$3.5 billion in annual health benefits. It found that children, the elderly, and low-income communities are especially vulnerable to air pollution from gas appliances and should be prioritized in future policies to curb emissions.

When the SLO City Council made the effort to encourage the creation of all-electric buildings, and a gas industry toady issued an outrageous threat to stop them from doing so, they were not, in fact, "both wrong," per The Shredder in the May 14 New Times. As the UCLA study makes clear, the SLO City Council was right; Big Gas is wrong.

On June 16, the Council pushed past a blizzard of disinformation and approved the Clean Energy Choice Program for New Buildings. The program encourages clean, efficient, and cost effective all-electric new buildings through incentives and local amendments to the California Energy Code requiring new buildings with natural gas to be more efficient.

Pending final Council adoption on July 7 and California Energy Commission approval, the program will go into effect on September 1, 2020. More information about the Clean Energy

Choice Program for New Buildings, including program applicability and exemptions, is available at slocity.org/cleanenergychoice.

Prior to the Council's vote, the Sierra Club brought the UCLA study to their attention and summarized its key findings, augmenting the city staff's analysis of the Clean Energy Choice Program's carbon reduction and cost effectiveness in their staff report for the June 17 meeting.

We know the Shredder is not the only one to have missed the boat on this issue and painted it as a kind of vanity project by the city council (and, presumably, the other 29 local governments statewide that have preceded SLO in encouraging or requiring all-electric new buildings). If you are among that number, dear reader, we strongly encourage you to click on the link above to read the facts about the Clean Energy Choice Program, as well as the link to the report from the UCLA School of Public Health.