



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY
Dr Marisa Paterson MLA (Chair), Ms Jo Clay MLA (Deputy Chair), Mr Ed Cocks MLA

Inquiry into Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Reduction (Natural Gas Transition)
Amendment Bill 2022
ANSWER TO QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE
13 SEPTEMBER 2022

Asked by Mr Ed Cocks MLA on 13 SEPTEMBER 2022: Mr Rob Thorman took on notice the following question:

In relation to safety concerns and associated analysis related to gas bottles vs mains connections in a housing development (Page 17 UPT):

MR COCKS: A supplementary on that question. Do you have any view of the comparative safety issues around gas bottles verse mains connections in a housing development?

Mr Thorman: Not off hand, no. I would have to provide information on that on notice.

MR COCKS: Yes.

Mr Thorman: But—

MR COCKS: Yes. Any analysis that you have got, that would be useful.

Mr Thorman: Yes.

MINISTER RATTENBURY: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

It is assumed that this question relates to the use of 'plumbed' appliances, that are installed at homes, rather than portable LPG bottles (9kg and below) used on portable appliances such as outdoor BBQs, patio heaters and camping equipment.

There are publicly available studies linking cooking with un-flued gas cooktops with childhood asthma both in Australia and the United States of America. The risks from un-flued cooktops are present for both natural gas and LPG installations. Worksafe ACT has information on their [website](#) about the risk of un-flued gas heaters, as well as [information](#) on the safe use of LPG.

The primary safety issue relating to the use of LPG bottles, as opposed to mains connected natural gas is that of storage and placement of the bottles.

All gas installations for LPG must be installed by a licensed gas fitter, and the service requires inspection, similar to natural gas appliances. The installation and placement of gas bottles in the ACT is regulated through the *Gas Safety Act 2000*, Australian Standards, the National Construction Code and is overseen by the Construction Regulator (for gas installations), Worksafe ACT (for placement of bottles on commercial sites) and Building Certifiers to ensure placement of bottles does not encroach boundary rules. The relevant Australian Standards are:

- a. 1596:2008 - The storage and handling of LP Gas
- b. 5601:2013 – Gas installations

Some key features of the various rules for plumbed LPG gas specifies:

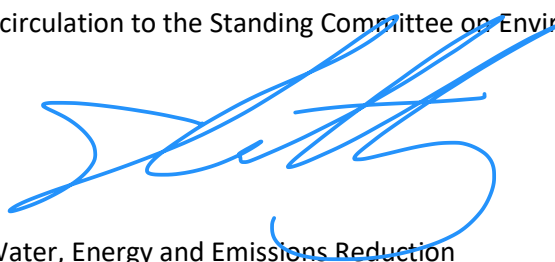
- a. Gas bottles must be stored outside in a well-ventilated area away from any flame, heat or other ignition source
- b. Gas bottles must be prevented from falling and protected from impact and damage, especially to the valve
- c. Gas bottles must be stored on a flat concrete surface
- d. Gas bottles must not be within 450mm of the property boundary

The limitation of any encroachment (not limited to gas bottles) along the side boundary in the National Construction Code will limit placement of LPG bottles for many new homes in new suburbs to the rear of the residence. This is due to many homes being built to the boundary limits. If the safety requirements are not met, a new building or gas installation may not pass the building inspection, or the gas inspection. Provided that the standards and regulations are met, the level of risk associated with the use of LPG bottles in housing developments compared to mains connected natural gas is around the same.

In relation to portable gas bottles and appliances: A significant proportion of ACT households already have and use LPG bottles at their homes on a regular basis for BBQs, outdoor heaters and camping equipment. Portable gas bottles also have specific storage requirements and come with instructions. Safety incidents relating to portable bottles are generally confined to persons not using bottles in accordance with their instructions or being stored incorrectly.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Environment, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Signature:



Date:

22/9/22

Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction