

We Need to Take Seriously the Pollutants Emitted When Cooking With Gas

Two years ago last week, one of the headlines in my column was, “Evidence Mounts That Gas Stoves Are Harmful to Health.” It cited an article the previous week in the journal *Environmental Science and Technology* which quoted a study reporting that 12 hazardous pollutants, including benzene, a carcinogen, were detected in the emissions of gas ranges. That study was limited to only 159 homes in 19 California counties.

Last week, however, *The Guardian* published an article with a more ominous headline: “Pollutants from gas stoves kill 40,000 Europeans each year.”

According to that article, “researchers attributed 36,031 early deaths each year to gas cookers in the EU, and a further 3,928 in the UK. They say their estimates are conservative because they only considered the health effects of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), and not other gases such as carbon monoxide and benzene.”

Now, that's a wake-up call!

I did a web search for “dangers of gas stove emissions” and found that multiple other studies had been conducted from late 2022 to now reaching similar conclusions but without that large a database of impacted human beings.

On Sept. 7, 2022, Harvard Health reported that, “Gas stoves affect air quality inside and outside your home, circulating pollutants that raise risk for asthma and other illnesses.”

On Jan. 19, 2023, *Scientific American* wrote that, “Scientists have long known that gas stoves

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emit pollutants that irritate human airways and can cause or exacerbate respiratory problems.”

On Feb. 15, 2023, Brady Seals of the Rocky Mountain Institute announced that, “New peer-reviewed research from RMI, the University of Sydney, and the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, which I co-authored with two epidemiologists and a colleague, estimated that nearly 13 percent of childhood asthma cases in the United States can be linked to having a gas stove in the home.”

On April 7, 2023, Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health reported, “A recent study suggests that gas stoves contribute to about 13 percent of childhood asthma cases in the U.S. — equivalent to the risk of developing asthma due to exposure to secondhand smoke. NO₂ can cause respiratory problems, particularly for those with asthma or other respiratory illnesses, and long-term exposure to NO₂ from gas stoves has also been linked to an increased risk of developing heart disease.”

On June 21, 2023, Yale Climate Connections reported that, “Cooking with gas emits dangerous levels of benzene, a carcinogen, into household air.”

On May 3, 2024, Stanford University reported that, “A study of air pollution in U.S. homes reveals how much gas and propane stoves increase exposure to nitrogen dioxide, a pollutant linked to childhood asthma.”

This problem disproportionately affects low-income populations for a

few reasons. First, they are more likely to have gas ranges, especially in cities where gas service is ubiquitous. Second, the problem is exacerbated in smaller kitchens, resulting in the emissions being less dispersed. And third, an open gas oven is sometimes used by low-income renters for heating.

Clearly, a rapid and large-scale switch from gas ranges to induction or electric ranges is not practical or affordable, especially for low-income populations, but health experts have some advice on what to do in the meantime. First of all, **ventilate your kitchen when using a gas stove.** If you have a vent fan above your range, use it **every time you use your range**, but only if it vents to the outside. Many vent fans, such as those built into over-the-stove microwave ovens, merely filter the air of particles, blowing it back into

the kitchen. To see if your vent fan ventilates to the outside, open the cabinet above it to see if there’s a flue passing through it.

A good short-term solution, if you have \$50-100 to spend, would be to **purchase a plug-in induction burner**, as Rita and I have done. Search for “induction burners” and you’ll find many starting as low as \$49.99. Because induction is so efficient, most induction burners plug into a standard electrical outlet.

Rita and I like to buy live lobsters and boil them, but it takes a **long** time to heat a pot of water large enough to submerge four 1½-lb. lobsters. We have an electric range, but the next time I buy lobsters, we’re going to use our induction burner, because it will heat that water much quicker **and** uses far less electricity than the burner on a standard electric range.

NAR's Clear Cooperation Policy Under Attack

“Clear Cooperation” is a policy introduced by the National Association of Realtors (NAR) in November 2019 to reduce the use of “pocket listings” by brokers who don’t want to share their high commissions with a buyer’s agent.

Let’s say that a broker lists a home for 6%, to use a round number. (The average has long been between 5% and 5.5%.) The standard listing contract designates the percentage of that 6% which the listing broker would share with the broker who produced the buyer. For a \$1,000,000 listing, that would be, for example, \$30,000 commission to each agent.

You can understand why the listing agent would want to keep that listing off the MLS and retain the full \$60,000.

Most Realtors, like myself, would consider that unethical but also believe it’s not in the seller’s best interest. The seller wants as many buyers as possible to know about his listing so it sells for the highest price.

From the listing broker’s perspective, getting 6% of \$1,000,000 is a whole lot better than keeping only

3% of a higher price.

Enter the Clear Cooperation policy, which the MLSs were ordered to enforce. It angered a lot of brokers, including the non-members of NAR, who are still members of the MLS.

CCP, as the policy is called, requires that a listing be entered on the MLS within one business day of it being shown or publicized in any way, whether it be a sign in the ground, a Facebook post, mass email or whatever. And it could only be “Coming Soon” on the MLS as long as no showings are granted, including by the listing agent, and for, at most, 7 days.

The attacks on CCP, mostly by large brokerages, have surged recently, but Zillow’s Susan Daimler, like myself, defends the policy as being in the consumer’s best interest. In fact, she wants to see the policy strengthened by eliminating the “office exclusive” loophole, which discriminates against small brokerages and brokers by allowing big brokerages to display MLS listings only to agents within that brokerage — a pocket listing at the brokerage level.

Buy a Duplex & Have Tenant Help With the Mortgage

It’s not often that you can buy a duplex where one side is vacant but the other side is rented, contributing \$1,500 or more per month to your mortgage payment! That’s the situation with this well-built and well-maintained brick duplex at 12613 W. 8th Ave., Golden, next to Welches-



ter Tree Grant Park in that quiet subdivision called Foothills View Estate. The two sides of this duplex are mirror images of each other and identical in terms of updating, such as the newer bath fixtures, double-pane windows, and new garage doors. (The two one-car garages are accessed from an alley.) The vacant half has a 12’x30’ wood deck, from which you can see the foothills to the west. Welches-ter Park is just a block away, with lots of nature trails, including to the adjoining Welches-ter Elementary School. A narrated video tour of **both sides** of this duplex can be viewed at www.GRElistings.com, along with interior photos of the vacant unit. The rented unit is not available to see until you’re under contract, but it is identical in condition to the vacant unit, as you will see on the video tour. Showings begin Thursday, Nov. 14th. **Open Saturday, Nov. 16th, 11am to 1pm.** Or call **Kathy Jonke at 303-990-7428** to request a private showing.

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