

Gas use in the home is a health risk



Far from the healthy, natural image that is promoted, the use of gas for heating and cooking has many well-known health risks in our homes and schools. Harmful indoor air pollution from gas appliances such as space and water heating as well as cooking, can be reduced but not eliminated through proper ventilation.

Key Facts

- Whether your gas stove is being operated or not, the release of methane (CH₄), carbon dioxide (CO₂), carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) into your home can make indoor air up to five times dirtier than outdoor air.
- Exposure to high concentrations of CO can lead to headaches, nausea, confusion, tiredness, shortness of breath, memory problems, chest pain, loss of consciousness and sometimes death. Carbon monoxide is colourless, odourless and tasteless, meaning that victims are unaware they are being exposed.
- Homes with gas stoves contain 50 to 400% higher concentrations of NO₂ than those with electric stoves.
- Cooking with gas has asthma risks comparable to second hand cigarette smoke.
- 12 per cent of the burden of childhood asthma in Australia is due to indoor gas stoves.
- Children living in a home with a gas stove had a 42 per cent increased risk of having asthma symptoms.
- Pre-schoolers who had grown up with gas appliances in the home were at higher risk of developing symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and had a lower level of general cognitive functioning.

Today's gas appliances are a poor cousin to more efficient and healthier electric alternatives. Like kerosene, coal and wood, household gas is a technology that belongs in the past: a health risk that we no longer.

References

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