

**From:** [Cathryn Chudy](#)  
**To:** [Records Management \(UTC\)](#)  
**Subject:** Re: UG-210729  
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External Email

Executive Director and Secretary Amanda Maxwell,

I am a reluctant customer of Northwest Natural (NWN) in Vancouver, WA, with a gas furnace that I have had in my home since 2003, when I converted from heating oil to gas.

I shut my furnace off every year from late spring through mid fall, and I object to my gas company being allowed to subsidize new pipeline construction to new homes at the expense of me and other existing rate payers, which results in a gas bill even when I am not using my furnace, and higher gas bills than necessary when I am. I am a retired senior living on a fixed income, and every penny counts.

Such "rate basing" is an obvious way for gas utilities to incentivize new gas customers and extend the use of gas in homes indefinitely into the future. This guarantees the continued survival for profit-making of gas companies, while it also means endangering the health and safety of all of us in the community who have learned that fossil gas is unhealthy and unsafe. Methane leakage from fossil gas pipelines has been identified as a potent source of harmful GHG emissions.

I now know that the use of fossil gas in buildings is Washington's fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions, and this poses a significant threat to our climate. We have experienced three successive climate disasters in the past year (wildfire smoke in September of 2020, the ice storm of February 2021, and the heat domes of summer 2021.) It is essential that we act now to reduce fossil fuel emissions, given what we have learned about climate science. It makes no sense, given our state's commitment to reduce GHG emissions and policies designed to meet emission reduction targets, for the state to allow incentivizing new customers to join the very gas system that perpetuates the harm that comes from that system.

It is clear that gas line extension allowances should be ended, consistent with evolving state climate policy, for our health and safety, and for a safe and healthy future for our children and grandchildren as well.

Updates to Washington's GHG emission reduction targets in 2020, and the 2021 State Energy Strategy, make it clear that significant building electrification will be needed from this point forward in order to accomplish those targets. We need to stop digging deeper with new fossil fuel infrastructure. For this reason, it also makes sense to assess whether to modify electric line allowances to better promote building electrification.

I appreciate the opportunity to offer these comments.

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