

## Senate Bill 3: Banning Gas Stoves - Article 1

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# Should the U.S. Ban Gas Stoves?

While the White House opposes an all-out ban, a federal safety agency is studying the health and environmental hazards of the kitchen appliances

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The United States Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) is grappling with how to address gas stoves. These common kitchen appliances can pose a risk to human health by emitting air pollutants indoors. The federal agency, which aims to reduce injuries and deaths linked to consumer products, will consider a ban on new gas stoves along with other, less drastic measures, such as implementing emissions standards, reports Bloomberg's Ari Natter.

Amid mounting public health and environmental concerns about the appliances, one of the agency's commissioners, Richard Trumka Jr., tells Bloomberg that "any option is on the table."

"This is a hidden hazard," he tells the publication. "Products that can't be made safe can be banned."

In response to these comments, the CPSC and the Biden administration faced an almost immediate backlash from the oil and gas industry and its political allies. Now, the head of the safety commission is walking back these statements. "I am not looking to ban gas stoves," Alexander Hoehn-Saric, the commission chair, said in a statement on Wednesday. "And the CPSC has no proceeding to do so."

But the agency is seeking information on the subject: This spring, it will put out a public request for details on the possible problems and solutions related to gas stoves. Deciding whether and how to regulate consumer products typically takes a long time, but at a virtual webinar in December, Trumka said public pressure could help speed the process, potentially spurring regulations by the end of 2023, per the Hill's Rachel Frazin. Lawmakers have also asked the CPSC to address the issues posed by gas stoves.

Roughly 40 percent of homes in the U.S. have gas stoves, powered by some sort of combustible fuel—most commonly, natural gas.

But scientists have found the appliances can leak unsafe levels of pollutants like carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, methane and small particulates into the air. An October study published in the journal *Environmental Science & Technology* found that gas stoves in California were emitting several harmful chemicals, even while turned off. The nonprofit Consumer Reports also found high levels of nitrogen oxide emissions in its testing and urged shoppers to consider buying electric ranges instead.

Those indoor emissions may contribute to an array of health issues, including leukemia, cardiovascular issues and respiratory illnesses. A new study published in December in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* suggests that 12.7 percent of childhood asthma cases in the U.S. can be linked with gas stoves, which is similar to the asthma-related risks posed by other factors, such as secondhand smoke.

In addition to the public health concerns, gas stoves also emit heat-trapping gases that contribute to global warming—most notably, methane, which is 25 times more efficient at trapping radiation than carbon dioxide is, per the Environmental Protection Agency. As such, some municipalities and counties are enacting rules to limit gas-powered

appliances, such as stoves, furnaces and water heaters. The federal government included rebates for electric cooktops in the Inflation Reduction Act to encourage consumers to get rid of their gas stoves.

Meanwhile, natural gas and home appliance industry groups say moving away from natural gas is a mistake—one that could prove costly to consumers. In a recent blog post, the American Gas Association wrote that banning natural gas could lead to increased heating and overall housing costs.

“Pushing unpopular policies that risk dramatically increasing the cost of living isn’t just irresponsible, it’s outright malpractice, and the harm could be felt by millions,” wrote the trade organization.

The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers argues that banning gas stoves would fail to address indoor air pollution from cooking, “because all forms of cooking, regardless of heat source, generate air pollutants, especially at high temperatures,” says Jill Notini, the association’s spokeswoman, in a statement, as reported by CNN Business’ Ramishah Maruf.

For the time being, no changes regarding the legality of gas stoves are happening at the federal level. “The President does not support banning gas stoves,” Michael Kikukawa, a spokesperson for the White House, tells the New York Times’ Elena Shao and Lisa Friedman. “And the Consumer Product Safety Commission, which is independent, is not banning gas stoves.”