

Your Home Your Choice, says Master Plumbers

Master Plumbers is empowering consumers to make their own decisions about the Victorian Government's forced transition away from gas, armed with information in a new factsheet that spells out all the facts, not just what the Government wants people to hear.

The Victorian Government introduced legislation to give itself extraordinary powers on 11 September this year to ban all gas appliances in existing homes, including gas cooktops, potentially stripping away the rights of homeowners, renters and rental providers. The government has promised to consult with the community later this year via a Regulatory Impact Statement.

Master Plumbers said that it was difficult to see how there can be any assurance of a genuine consultation process when the Victorian Government will already be able to bring in new gas bans for existing homes, potentially without the need for any further scrutiny in Parliament, by industry or the wider community.

Master Plumbers' CEO Peter Daly said that the new *Your Home Your Choice* factsheet is designed to assist consumers to have informed conversations with their trusted plumber about energy choices. It highlights six important questions to ask about the true costs involved when deciding whether switching gas to electric is right for their home.

"Homeowners in the more than 80 per cent of Victorian homes which are connected to mains gas deserve the right to make informed choices about whether converting to an all-electric home is right in their circumstances. The Victorian Government says that all households will save on energy bills by going all-electric, but in reality, no two homes are the same," Mr. Daly said.

Master Plumbers said that consumers' right to choose matters, despite the Victorian Government's plan to take it away, and Master Plumbers is encouraging all consumers to ask their trusted plumber for expert advice before deciding to switch.

"Plumbers are the energy experts with extensive experience in installing and maintaining appliances which heat our homes, provide hot water and help us prepare food. Plumbers provide trusted independent advice about both gas appliances and electric appliances (such as heat pumps) and can help consumers to understand the pros and cons of each and the actual cost of switching," Mr. Daly said.

Master Plumbers' factsheet will assist the thousands of conversations every day across Victoria that plumbers have with homeowners, rental providers, renters and businesses.

Victoria's proposed gas ban overlooks the diversity of individual household needs and options. Heat pumps can be very efficient, but are not always ideal for all homes, and cost differences for quality appliances can mean payback periods well exceed government claims.

"While electric appliances may suit some, others may prefer to continue to use gas, especially when many people are very concerned about putting all their energy eggs in the one basket," Mr. Daly said.

Master Plumbers believes that the energy transition is essential but challenging. Where Master Plumbers has an issue is the Victorian Government's broken promises for an orderly transition done with genuine consultation.

Master Plumbers' factsheet also provides a link to an already existing Parliament of Victoria Legislative Council Petition which calls on the Government to respect and protect Victorian's right to select the most reliable, affordable energy solution for their homes. This Petition enables consumers and plumbing industry participants who don't want gas banned to register their opposition formally and securely.

The factsheet will be available to all plumbing businesses in Victoria via www.plumber.com.au/yourhomeyourchoice

Master Plumbers is the peak body for plumbing businesses in Victoria and is one of the largest dedicated plumbing training organisations and employers of plumbing apprentices in Australia.

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