

ELECTRIFICATION: BE ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF HISTORY!

The laws of physics give us no choice

Electrification is a big win for our community and the upside is huge: slashing emissions, creating jobs and reducing housing and utility costs.

Climate change is such a frightening and overwhelming problem that we can feel helpless and paralyzed when facing it. But we all bear responsibility to address this crisis with courage, wisdom and perseverance.

Most importantly, we must work together. Yet it does not appear that Northwest Natural can do this.

Climate collapse tends to be rapid and abrupt, not gradual and continuous. Complex systems can shift suddenly and once a system is pushed past a tipping point it cannot realistically be reversed. We saw this in the destruction of coral reefs and we are likely seeing this in the Amazon rainforest and the melting tundra releasing stored carbon. Oregon is close to a tipping point as drought and fires destroy our forests. Last year's deadly heat dome was an abrupt change that climate scientists did not expect for decades.

"Electrification is critical for decarbonization"

...states a World Economic Forum report. The upside is huge: electrification will potentially reduce "emissions from the transportation, building and industrial sectors that account for 65% of all US greenhouse gas emissions," says author Kathryn Clearly in *Electrification 101*. According to the Sierra Club, swapping out gas appliances for electric ones is a big climate win, reducing the average household's carbon footprint by 50%. CNN says an electrified home in Sacramento will "emit 82% less greenhouse gasses by 2050."¹

Electrification will boost the local economy

A study by UCLA found that electrifying California over the next 25 years will create 8 times as many jobs as may be lost in the gas industry plus support an additional 100,000 full-time jobs in construction, manufacturing and energy sector each year. Pro-business magazine *Forbes* says on Oregon's ambitious climate program: "Policies enacted since 2020 will add nearly 10,000 jobs and \$2.5 billion to Oregon's GDP, but enacting more ambitious climate policies on top of these would increase that number to 18,000 new jobs and \$4 billion in state GDP in 2050."

All-electric homes may be less expensive initially and over time

Northwest Natural and their allies express concern that electrification will raise the cost of housing, citing one report. Yet other reports indicate that electrification is cheaper. An analysis from Rocky Mountain Institute shows an all-electric home in Eugene to be cheaper up front and on a continued basis. Not only are electrical heat/cooling pumps much more efficient, but only one appliance is needed as opposed to installing a gas furnace and an air conditioner. Northwest Natural, however, has a 'secret weapon' to make gas homes cheaper: a "line extension allowance" is often paid to building developers to entice them to build new houses with gas. This subsidy is paid for by existing customers.²

Natural gas stoves pollute homes and are health hazards

According to the EPA, homes with gas stoves record 50% to over 400% higher levels of nitrogen dioxide than homes with electric stoves, levels of pollution that are illegal if found outdoors. Nitrogen dioxide can lead to heart failure and asthma and children in homes with gas stoves have a 42% increased risk of asthma symptoms. Electric Induction cooktops are revolutionizing cooking with precise temperature control, for faster, efficient cooking. Without open flames, they are safer than gas and dramatically reduce indoor pollutants.

Northwest Natural did not bargain in good faith with Eugene City Council

The City of Eugene and Northwest Natural spent months negotiating to modify their franchise agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while allowing new permits for natural gas construction. City councilors involved in the negotiations said Northwest Natural delayed and avoided making real commitments.

Northwest Natural is committed to their bottom line

Climate change is such a frightening and overwhelming problem that we can feel helpless and paralyzed when facing it. But we all bear responsibility to address this crisis with courage, wisdom and perseverance. Most importantly, we must work together. Yet it does not appear that Northwest Natural can do this. They are part of an industry that has denied, misled and stalled climate action for decades. They are a for-profit company that is, not surprisingly, committed to their bottom line and they are suing the state; opposing the Climate Protection Program. For our children and grandchildren's future, our community must take the modest step of limiting new fossil fuel infrastructure.

1 <https://www.cnn.com/2022/01/10/perspectives/redfin-ceo-home-climate/index.html>
2 <https://oregoncub.org/news/blog/rate-case-update-cub-pushes-back-on-nw-naturals-proposed-12-rate-hike/2521/>

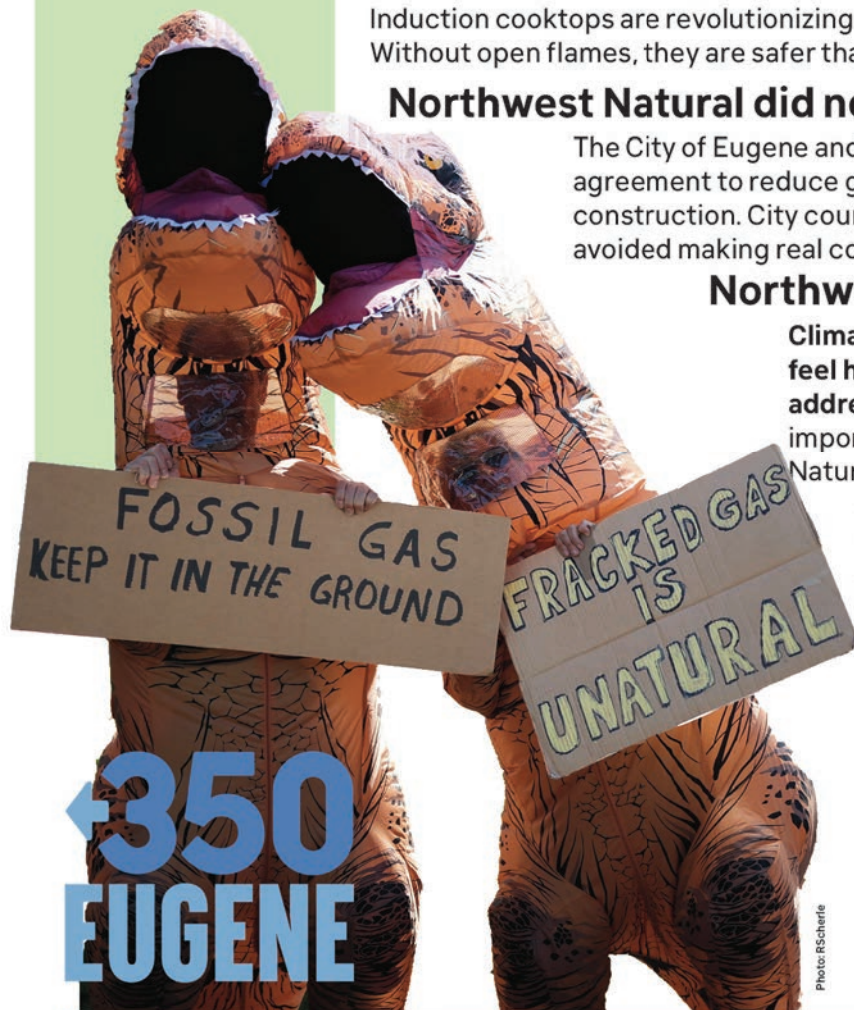


Photo: RScherle

OUR EARTH OUR COMMUNITY OUR RESPONSIBILITY

A MESSAGE from active neighbors CONCERNED for the FUTURE of our PLANET