

Paula Kusack

Subject: FW: For Upcoming Agenda - FW: Simple Language Update to Boost Climate Awareness & Drive Immediate Action
Attachments: Transcripts asking 'Do you know what natural gas is'.pdf

From: Edgar Dearden <eddie@gnarinc.com>
Sent: Friday, April 21, 2023 3:30 PM
To: WebInfo <webinfo@langleycity.ca>
Subject: Simple Language Update to Boost Climate Awareness & Drive Immediate Action

To the Mayor and Council,

Imagine hearing the term "natural gas" for the very first time. What might it mean? Logically, one might assume it refers to any gas naturally emitted, such as oxygen (O₂) produced by plants, carbon dioxide (CO₂) produced by animals, or radon (Rn) produced by rocks.

There are, in fact, hundreds of naturally occurring gasses on Earth, including: ammonia (NH₃), argon (Ar), carbon monoxide (CO), chlorine (Cl₂), helium (He), hydrogen (H₂), hydrogen sulfide (H₂S), krypton (Kr), neon (Ne), nitrogen (N₂), nitrous oxide (N₂O), ozone (O₃), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), water vapor (H₂O) and xenon (Xe) to name a few.

However, the term "natural gas" as you use it specifically refers to just one, methane (CH₄), a product of anaerobic decomposition of organic matter.

I am writing to express my concern that many residents of your municipality may not be aware that "natural gas" is a fossil fuel. I have attached a PDF containing transcripts of conversations with five working professionals in BC who could not correctly define "natural gas."

Now, consider hearing the term "fossil gas" for the very first time. One might logically deduce that it refers to a gas that is a fossil fuel, which is accurate. The term "fossil" means "preserved from a past geologic age," and "fossil gas" aptly describes the combustible gas obtained through hydraulic fracturing or "fracking" from shale rock formations under the ground in Northern BC.

I request that your organization update its style guide to replace the term "natural gas" with "fossil gas" when referring to the gas supplied to consumers. This change would clarify that the subject is fossil fuel that we must urgently reduce.

This simple, impactful climate action can be enacted immediately by updating documents using the Find & Replace function in most word processing applications. **Please consider the following motion to direct municipal staff to make this change:**


"WHEREAS the term 'natural gas' may lead to confusion about its nature as a fossil fuel, BE IT RESOLVED that the Council directs municipal staff to replace the term 'natural gas' with 'fossil gas' in all municipal documentation, thereby improving public understanding and promoting urgency in addressing climate change."

Kind Regards,



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We gratefully acknowledge the land, now known as Whistler and Revelstoke, where we live create and play, in the unceded traditional lands of the Skwxwú7mesh and Lilwat7úl, the Sinixt, Ktunaxa, Secwepemc and Syilx.