



**18 April 2024**

**The Victorian Minister's no notice ban on gas appliance rebates will hit households hard and cost jobs**

Victorian families grappling with a cost-of-living crisis while facing justified concerns on energy security now face further pressures. Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change, Lily D'Ambrosio today released a Gazette which instituted a law prohibiting gas distribution companies from providing residential or small business customers discounts on their gas appliances.

The industry and consumers have been given a mere 60 days to adjust to the new requirements.

The president of the Gas Appliance Manufacturers Association of Australia, Ross Jamieson, said the Victorian Government's policies meant increasing financial burdens and energy uncertainty for families and family-owned businesses.

With no consultation with an industry that employs more than 4,000 Australians, Minister D'Ambrosio suddenly enacted new restrictions on the energy choices available to Victorian homes and businesses. This was first proposed in November 2023 but quietly shelved after internal concerns within the government about the impact of cost-of-living for households.

"Suddenly sneaking through this ban in the Victoria Government Gazette without announcement or consultation, is a cynical move by the Minister to minimize scrutiny."

"The new restrictions now actually make it an offence for the gas distribution businesses to support low-income households at a time they are struggling with energy costs. These households and small businesses are going to pay the price for the Government's failure to ensure there is an adequate gas supply for the State."

"It represents a further ideological attack against gas – for no significant impact on the state's emissions," Mr Jamieson said.

"It also does nothing for emissions noting that the Federal Government's recently released Future Gas Strategy consultation paper notes that only 2.3% of Australia's overall emissions come from use of gas in homes and small businesses.

"In a state still dependent on brown coal for the bulk of its power generation, it makes little sense to focus on residential and small business gas use, or to force Victorians to use electric appliances that will be powered by coal. Especially in light of the recent electricity outages – our electricity grid is evidently unreliable.

"The Minister's obsessive focus on residential gas does nothing to advance Victoria's transition to a renewable energy grid and nothing to ensure energy security for Victoria," Mr Jamieson said.

He said consecutive measures restricting the gas industry hurt Victorian families who want to purchase gas appliances, and the Victorian workers who make them.

"More than 60% of gas appliances sold in Australia are made in Australia," Mr Jamieson said. "GAMAA members have already seen a loss of 10% in direct industry jobs, with a further 20% reduction likely within 6 months should the change to rebates be rammed through in conjunction with the ban on connecting gas to new homes."

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