

OPPOSE THE WILTON FRACKED GAS PIPELINE EXTENSION

About the proposed fracked gas line expansion in Wilton:

Eversource is planning to bring more fracked gas to and through Wilton by increasing the size of an existing pipeline and expanding its reach. More gas pipelines delivering more gas are inconsistent with the research and calls for action on climate from the scientific community including the United Nation Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Fracked (or what corporations call “natural” gas) has been implicated in the acceleration of the climate crisis as well as devastating environmental damage (more below).

The pipeline was planned by the Town Engineer and DPW staff starting in 2020, and the community was not made aware until April 13, 2022, and given only 2 weeks to respond.

Please help to oppose this pipeline and move us toward readily available and sustainable fossil-free alternatives.

Ways you can oppose the expansion of climate-destroying gas in Wilton:

1. Don't sign up to purchase gas from this costly and damaging pipeline. Under a recent ruling by the Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA), ratepayers will no longer pay for new gas pipelines. But this project is grandfathered in *IF* Eversource can sign up enough customers.
2. Ask the Town of Wilton to stop new gas hookups. Contact members of the Board of Selectmen and demand they take action to transition Wilton from climate-destroying fossil fuel buildings to clean and renewable alternatives. Communities across the country have passed ordinances to transition away from fossil fuels to all-electric buildings. For example, in July 2022, the Washington DC Council voted 13-0 for the Clean Energy DC Building Code Act, which will require that by 2026, new buildings in DC are net-zero energy, meaning the buildings are highly energy efficient and produce the energy they use on-site from renewable sources. The bill prohibits the combustion of dirty fuels in new buildings, which will reduce indoor air pollution and cut greenhouse gas emissions.
3. Ask CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection in its upcoming Comprehensive Energy Strategy to recommend an end to all gas pipeline expansion and instead create a plan for all-electric buildings. Send an email to katie.dykes@ct.gov and deep.energybureau@ct.gov.

More about the negative impacts of gas:

- Climate Change
 - The science is unequivocal. We have 8 years to drastically reduce greenhouse gas emissions to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. “Natural” gas is a greenhouse gas and an unsustainable fossil fuel implicated in accelerating the climate crisis. It is a short term pollutant, 86 times more powerful than carbon in the short term. “Natural” gas plays a significant role in contributing to climate change due to leaking methane from fracking wells, pipelines, meters, and inside homes. An article published in 2020, *An Enhanced Procedure For Urban Mobile Methane Leak Detection*, was based on a study commissioned by Sierra Club CT which found methane leaks in Hartford cities and towns were five times as common as recorded by PURA. All fossil fuels, including gas, must be rapidly

phased out to meet scientifically supported greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals and avert catastrophic global warming.

- The pipeline installation project clearly does not advance the state's decarbonization law, the Global Warming Solutions Act, which requires a 45% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.
- Environmental Damage of Fracking. Fracking is pumping and dumping contaminated water, mud, toxic chemicals and air pollution into communities and the environment. Fracking routinely employs numerous toxic chemicals, including methanol, benzene, naphthalene and trimethylbenzene. It can also expose people to harm from lead, arsenic and radioactivity that are brought back to the surface with fracking flowback fluid. In California, wastewater from oil and gas development has resulted in contaminated groundwater through surface storage leakage. Air sampling near fracking sites in Texas and California has detected concentrations of hazardous air pollutants high enough to make people sick.
- Increasing Greenhouse Gas Emission from Buildings. Greenhouse gas emissions rose significantly in Connecticut after thousands of buildings and homes were converted to fracked methane for heating and cooking at ratepayer expense. This increase in carbon emissions doesn't account for the huge increase in methane leaks that are associated with gas movement across pipelines and in buildings.
- Negative Health Impacts. The negative health impacts of living with fracked methane infrastructure such as furnaces and stoves means that many more people, in particular vulnerable children and the elderly, experienced exacerbation of, or new onset of, asthma and/or other respiratory or cardiac ailments. A growing body of research on gas stoves shows gas stoves release several hazardous pollutants, notably nitrogen dioxide and carbon monoxide. More at:
<https://www.psr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/health-effects-from-gas-stove-pollution.pdf>

The gas industry playbook:

The fracked gas industry, including our utility companies, are raking in record profits. These corporations engage in dishonest marketing ploys to keep us reliant on their non-renewable, dirty fossil fuels. They market fracked gas as a good choice for the climate, but, let's face it, more gas is only good for corporate profits, not our pocketbooks, our health, or our planet.

For example, Eversource routinely advertises that they are moving toward renewable sources for power while failing to mention that they are actively building and supporting more fossil gas infrastructure, locking our state into decades longer dependence on dirty fuels. A recent "Electric Customer Update" from June 2022 states "Sustainability at Eversource includes our vision to be a catalyst for clean energy, a pacesetter in carbon reduction...." Meanwhile, Eversource declines to recognize the impact that gas leaks have on the overall climate damage done by fracked gas; instead they are contributing to rising greenhouse gas emissions by increasing the amount of fracked gas coming to Connecticut. The marketing page Eversource includes in their bills also claims that Eversource is "Delivering a Sustainable Future" by "Protecting natural resources while holding ourselves accountable for the impact our business may have on the environment." This language is the definition of greenwashing.

On December 17, 2021 PURA assessed a civil penalty of \$1,797,000 against Eversource for its' marketing practices for the natural gas system expansion plan. Connecticut's Attorney General William Tong also settled with Eversource for [\\$1.8 million](#) saying "Eversource misled homeowners to get them to switch to natural gas. These high-pressure tactics are unacceptable coming from any business, much less a regulated utility. Eversource has already paid a \$1.8 million civil penalty imposed by the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA), and now they will pay an additional \$1.8 million to settle these serious consumer protection allegations."

Questions? Contact connecticut.chapter@sierraclub.org