

STAFF REPORT

TO INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

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DATE: February 23, 2024

TO: STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

NAME AND TITLE: Councillor Garth Frizzell, Chair, Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs

SUBJECT: Background on CleanBC

ATTACHMENT(S): CleanBC Roadmap to 2030

RECOMMENDATION(S):

1. THAT the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs RECEIVE FOR INFORMATION the report dated February 23, 2024, and titled "Background on CleanBC."

PURPOSE:

To provide the committee with information related to the CleanBC program, specifically gas appliances, as requested by a member of council via the committee chair.

BACKGROUND:

From the provincial government's webpage on the program, "CleanBC is government's plan to lower climate-changing emissions by 40% by 2030. We are already making progress but the scale of the climate emergency we are living through demands that we act with urgency. No one person, or government, can turn things around on their own. It will take all of us doing our part to overcome this historic challenge". Full text: <https://cleanbc.gov.bc.ca/>

As part of its zero-emission space and water heating mandate, the B.C. government is asking natural gas, electrical and lighting contractors for feedback on a proposed ban on the use of conventional gas equipment for residential, commercial, and institutional buildings.

The new rules, to take effect provincewide Jan. 1, 2030, would prohibit the sale and installation of gas water heaters and would also ban new gas furnaces and gas boilers unless either is installed as part of a hybrid dual fuel system (electric or gas heat pumps integrated with conventional gas combustion appliances).

According to an information sheet released by CleanBC in December of 2023:

"Space and water heating are the primary drivers of GHG emissions from buildings. To meet our targets, we need to ensure these functions are super-efficient, improve resilience and, wherever possible, run on clean electricity or other renewable fuels. To help accelerate this transition, we're committing to highest-efficiency standards for new space and water heating equipment by 2030, and earlier where feasible".

“After 2030, all new space and water heating equipment sold and installed in B.C. will be at least 100 per cent efficient, significantly reducing emissions compared to current combustion technology. Electric resistance technologies like baseboard and electric water heaters are 100 per cent efficient: they convert all the energy they use into heat. But heat pump technologies exceed 100 per cent efficiency by capturing and moving ambient heat, without having to produce it. The new requirements will encourage more people to install electric heat pumps while continuing to allow the use of electric resistance technologies. They will also allow hybrid electric heat pump gas systems and high-efficiency gas heat pumps”.

An Indigenous engagement session on this proposed program was held on the week of February 14th, 2024. Two general information sessions have also been held (the most recent was February 6th).

Considerations:

- The electricity-generating capacity and infrastructure required to deliver the energy has been called into question by critics as these appliances (and anticipated electric vehicle demand) may require more than is presently available.

The committee may wish to gather more information on how electrification and demand considerations will be addressed in the region as the CleanBC program is advanced.

- The Business Council of British Columbia has suggested that based on the “government’s own modelling, implementing the CleanBC policy agenda to meet the province’s greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets will push B.C.’s economic growth down to the slowest pace on record, which in turn will substantially dampen economic prosperity and well-being by the end of the decade”.

Full text: <https://bcbc.com/insight/governments-own-modelling-shows-its-cleanbc-plan-will-dampen-economic-growth-and-set-b-c-s-prosperity-back-more-than-a-decade/>

The committee may wish to gather more information on how economic considerations are being addressed within the CleanBC program.

- Many aspects of the CleanBC program will have impacts on the municipality and its residents.

The committee may wish to have staff support spend time further reviewing the CleanBC program, keeping current on developments and reporting back periodically (quarterly as example).

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

There are no additional financial considerations arising from this report.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

This report provides some background information on the CleanBC program, specifically the gas appliance aspect of the program.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Councillor Garth Frizzell, Chair, Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs

PREPARED BY: Eric Depenau, Acting Director, Administrative Services

APPROVED:

Walter Babicz, City Manager
Meeting Date: 2024/03/04