

LETTERS / well written, well read

Climate strategy doesn't confront wood heaters

The ACT Government's Climate Change Strategy is welcome, but it is disappointing that it gives so little attention to residential wood heaters.

This is despite evidence they are a greater contributor to both local air pollution and climate change than natural gas.

Successive ACT governments have been presented with evidence showing that wood heaters are the largest single source of neighbourhood air pollution.

In 2023, then ACT-Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment Dr Sophie Lewis found they were responsible for up to 78 per cent of air pollution in the Tuggeranong Valley.

She also noted that residential wood smoke contains black carbon and other pollutants that contribute to climate change, and that replacing wood heaters with cleaner forms of heating would help reduce the ACT's greenhouse emissions.

England's Chief Medical Officer, Prof Chris Whitty, has reported that even modern eco-designed wood heaters produce 450 times more toxic air pollution than gas central heating.

UK environmental policy analyst Duncan Brack has also found that, for the same amount of heat, burning wood emits more carbon dioxide than gas, oil and even coal.

If the ACT Government is serious about tackling climate change, why does its strategy largely ignore one of the problem's most significant contributors?

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