



Talking Points: December 4th BAAQMD Board Meeting

TOPLINE:

- I'm here today because... [Insert your experience with air quality impacts in your community]
- The Bay Area has some of the dirtiest air in the nation, and gas equipment in our homes and buildings produces more lung-damaging nitrogen oxide pollution than all our cars combined.
- These new standards will deliver multiple benefits to our communities, including:
 - Critical air quality improvements, especially for communities of color who are disproportionately impacted by pollution
 - Improved energy efficiency in homes and businesses
 - Urgently-needed cuts to the greenhouse gas emissions that are fueling climate impacts like wildfires, heatwaves, and drought
 - Better protection for families during extreme heat through efficient cooling systems
- BAAQMD must maintain its timeline for implementing healthy air standards for HVACs and water heaters to gradually transition homes to pollution-free equipment. We cannot afford to wait while our families and neighbors continue to breathe polluted air. This is about protecting our right to breathe clean air today and for generations to come.

TALKING POINTS:

Smart Implementation Timeline

- The standards – which only apply when existing equipment reaches its end-of-life – ensure a gradual, manageable transition:
 - About 5% of appliances need replacement annually
 - Phased implementation: 2027 for single-family water heaters, 2029 for residential furnaces, 2031 for multifamily/commercial water heaters
 - Gas appliances have a lifespan of 10-20 years or longer – delaying implementation would mean missing critical window to drive adoption of pollution-free equipment, locking in pollution for decades to come

SUSTAINED LOCAL ACTION ON CLIMATE AND AIR POLLUTION IS CRITICAL AS FEDERAL PROTECTIONS FACE ROLLBACKS

- With President-elect Trump's promises to dismantle environmental and air quality protections, state and local leadership is now more crucial than ever

- By maintaining its timeline, BAAQMD can demonstrate vital regional leadership in upgrading homes with pollution-free heating equipment

THE BAY AREA HAS SOME OF THE DIRTIEST AIR QUALITY IN THE NATION. AIR QUALITY REGULATORS HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO SAVE LIVES BY IMPLEMENTING HEALTHY AIR STANDARDS FOR HVACS AND WATER HEATERS.

- The Bay Area is failing to meet federal limits for safe levels of ozone pollution, and pollution from gas appliances is a major contributor to the problem. Maintaining the current implementation timeline is critical to delivering on a legal mandate for clean air.
- **Gas appliances in homes and buildings in the Bay Area are responsible for [more NOx pollution](#) than the region's passenger cars.** Communities of color and low-income communities are most impacted.
- When fully implemented, these standards will:
 - Prevent [15,000 asthma attacks](#) annually
 - Avoid [up to 85 premature deaths](#) each year
 - Save [\\$890 million](#) yearly in health costs

IMPLEMENTING HEALTHY AIR STANDARDS FOR HEATING EQUIPMENT WILL ADVANCE EQUITY IN THE BAY AREA, ESPECIALLY IN REGARDS TO HEALTH OUTCOMES.

- Communities of color and low-income communities are most impacted by NOx, PM2.5, and ozone pollution created by gas appliances.
 - A recent [study](#) found that communities of color were exposed to 55% more NO₂ than mostly white neighborhoods.
 - [99% of disadvantaged communities](#) in California live in an ozone nonattainment area.
- Upgrading homes with electric heat pumps as soon as possible can address a key source of NOx pollution, improving air quality and supporting the state in meeting federal air quality standards.
- BAAQMD has provided lead time for policymakers and market actors to focus on creating the conditions for equitable and affordable implementation of these standards.
 - We can ensure that communities of color and low-income communities burdened by air pollution, the climate crisis, and high energy bills are set up for success with the implementation of these standards at their current timeline.

ADDRESSING THE CLIMATE CRISIS REQUIRES UPGRADING CALIFORNIA'S BUILDINGS TO ZERO-EMISSION, CLEAN ENERGY TECHNOLOGY.

- Burning fossil fuels in homes for heating is responsible for [roughly 11%](#) of California's statewide climate emissions. California will not be able to meet its climate targets without eliminating pollution that comes from burning fossil fuels in homes.
- Moving to electric appliances such as heat pumps—and powering these appliances with renewable energy—is the ticket to zeroing out climate emissions from heating homes entirely. According to BAAQMD, electrifying Bay Area appliances could reduce climate-warming emissions from appliances [73% by 2046](#) from a 2019 baseline.

- Delaying implementation of these standards would mean:
 - Higher climate adaptation costs for Bay Area cities and counties
 - Increased health impacts from wildfires and extreme heat

THE BAY AREA AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (BAAQMD) IS WELL POSITIONED TO MAINTAIN ITS CURRENT TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTING HEALTHY AIR STANDARDS FOR HVACS AND WATER HEATERS

Market & Workforce Readiness

- The market for heat pumps and heat pump water heaters has transformed rapidly over the past two years, and with more than two years to go until BAAQMD's healthy air standards for water heaters begin to go into effect, the market will continue to grow and support a successful implementation.
 - Most Bay Area contractors consulted [have not experienced difficulties](#) in procuring HPWH; timelines are getting shorter
 - National sales [increased 26% in 2022](#) while gas water heater sales declined 17%
 - 82% of contractors report HPWH wait times of [only 1-3 days](#)
 - Most [distributors are confident](#) they can meet increased demand
- The Bay Area has built robust contractor training infrastructure to support a successful transition. Bay Area contractors are either prepared – or can prepare – for the installation of heat pump water heaters.
 - An extensive network of [185 training programs](#) is preparing electricians, plumbers, and HVAC technicians
 - [Two-thirds of contractors](#) are already familiar with the Air District's standards
 - [61% of contractors](#) plan to expand their workforce in the next three years, showing strong market confidence
 - Multiple successful training programs are creating opportunities, particularly for disadvantaged communities

Grid Readiness & Infrastructure

- The transition's impact on the grid will be minimal and manageable:
 - Standards are expected to increase electric demand in California by [just 2%](#) by 2045
 - Heat pump water heaters will mostly be programmed to run at non-peak times, supporting grid resilience
 - California has demonstrated its ability to rapidly scale infrastructure, adding [10,000 megawatts](#) of battery storage in just five years—enough to power 7.5 million homes
 - Highly efficient electric appliances that use less energy will help cut electricity demand, and make sure we have more than enough power to go around.



- Roughly 40% of California homes have air conditioning units that are more than 14 years old. Upgrading to heat pumps could save up to [2 gigawatts](#) of electricity load.

Affordability & Consumer Benefits

- With available incentives, upgrading to clean equipment saves money for most low-income households:
 - With available or forthcoming incentives, [most low-income households](#) will save money by purchasing a heat pump water heater instead of a gas water heater
 - Low-income households should [also experience net savings](#) if they're replacing a central air conditioner and furnace
 - Many [low-income households will save](#) when replacing a furnace with a heat pump HVAC
 - Operating costs are lower: Bay Area households on electrification-friendly rate plans [save about \\$380 annually](#) (\$32 monthly) when switching from gas to standard electric equipment, with savings increasing to \$495 annually (\$41 monthly) with high-efficiency equipment
 - Heat pumps are 2-4 times more efficient than gas equipment