



BC Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy

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BC Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy adds BC Building Trades Council, Concorde Distributing, Jackson Grills as efforts ramp up to keep affordable, dependable energy choices to heat homes, cook food, run businesses as municipalities increasingly block options for new homes, buildings

VANCOUVER – The BC Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy [BC CADE] has added three new labour and business members to its ranks, strengthening efforts to keep affordable, dependable energy choices to heat homes, cook food and run businesses in the face of municipalities blocking options.

BC CADE welcomes the BC Building Trades – representing more than 45,000 construction workers in 13 unions; Concorde Distributing – one of Canada’s leading distributors of high quality hearth and barbeque products, based in Abbotsford; and Jackson Grills – a BC-based company that makes and sells barbeque grills and outdoor heating products across North America.

BC CADE Director Bill Tieleman says coalition members are deeply concerned that municipal councils across the province have been blocking the use of renewable natural gas, natural gas and hydrogen in the future from new buildings at a time when BC faces severe electrical shortages.

“We’ve just seen that BC now has the lowest river levels since 1970 and seriously low snowpacks a year after BC Hydro was forced to import \$500 million of electricity from the United States, Alberta and other jurisdictions,” Tieleman said. “2024 will almost surely mark the second consecutive year when electricity has to be imported to BC instead of exported, yet major municipalities are moving quickly to ban affordable and dependable energy sources.”

Tieleman says BC CADE and its members are approaching municipalities to stop or reverse the early imposition of Zero Carbon Step Code regulations, which otherwise come into effect in 2030 – because the electricity shortage situation is quickly getting worse.

“Right now several large municipalities, including Vancouver, Victoria, Richmond and Nanaimo, have effectively banned renewable natural gas and natural gas from being used in new buildings to heat homes and water, run businesses, and cook food,” Tieleman said. “This is not only a premature decision – it will cost residents there a lot more money for electricity while removing their right to choose what’s best for them.”

“The BC Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy believes British Columbians want to make the transition to renewable energy but at an appropriate pace that doesn’t damage the economy and create job loss,” Tieleman says. “Blocking the increasing supply of renewable natural gas derived from garbage, farms, wood waste and wastewater where methane is already being released into our atmosphere just doesn’t make good sense.”

“That’s why such a diverse group of organizations – from the BC Building Trades to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business to homebuilding companies to fireplace manufacturers – has come together to urge municipalities to stop banning affordable and dependable energy sources at a time when BC has to import electricity,” Tieleman added.

BC Hydro estimates that only 19% of BC’s total energy is supplied by electricity, Tieleman says, but municipalities changing regulations are gambling on making new buildings 100% dependent on electrification.

“Having each municipality make different decisions on what parts of the Zero Carbon Step Code will be implemented and on what timeline creates a confusing patchwork of regulations across the province and a nightmare for builders, workers and stove, fireplace, barbeque and outdoor heating companies,” Tieleman said. “Municipalities need to reconsider our energy shortage situation and work with business and labour groups to ensure they don’t make a costly mistake for everyone.”

Members of the Coalition for Affordable Dependable Energy include: the BC Restaurant and Food Services Association; the International Union of Electrical Workers Local 213; the Surrey Board of Trade; the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade; the Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association of Canada; Restaurants Canada; UA Local 170; the Canadian Federation of Independent Business – BC Branch; Valor Radiant Gas Fireplaces; Pioneer Fireplace; the Limona Group; the South Asian Business Association; Northwest Stoves; AlignWest Homes; the Alliance of Beverage Licensees BC; the BC Building Trades; Concorde Distributing; and Jackson Grills.

The BC CADE website – www.bccade.ca – explains the choices BC needs to make to continue to have affordable, dependable energy and why with current drought conditions there could be a serious electricity shortage and high import costs.

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