



Op-Ed: New York's Con Edison Crisis is Far From Over

By *APRIL MCIVER, ROCCO J. LACERTOSA and KRIS DELAIR*

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With Con Edison proposing new rate increases, millions of New Yorkers will be paying close to \$2,000 more each year in energy costs, another serious blow to our ever-shrinking wallets in the name of green energy. Con Edison has stated the hikes are necessary to meet the new demands on its citywide system — and we would agree.

Over the next decade, New Yorkers should brace for a steady wave of rising energy costs as new infrastructure will be needed to fulfill the all-electric construction edict enacted here. Starting in 2024, no natural gas hookups were permitted in new construction and major renovations in New York City, and that has placed a major strain on the system. Nearly 6,000 permits were issued for new buildings last year alone, and that number is certain to rise as more and more companies choose to mandate on-site work schedules.

New York's power grid was not designed to handle an all-electric city, and such a massive conversion would require years of careful design, planning and collaboration among industry stakeholders. None of that happened when our elected officials implemented the gas ban — without proper industry input — and therefore, they set the stage for the pricing drama we are seeing unfold today.

Natural gas provides power for electricity, and this is the case for 38% of all electricity in the United States. In New York, that number is much higher where approximately 65% of electricity is produced by fossil fuels, the cleanest and most efficient being natural gas. Experts have long predicted that prohibiting new gas hookups will lead to significant socio-economic challenges and electric power supply concerns, and unfortunately, we are now seeing the first local evidence of this.



Creating healthier spaces is an important goal, and our members are committed to reducing our environmental impact with more sustainable materials and methods. Yet leaping to an all-electric mandate without the right infrastructure is an economic disaster waiting to happen, and this new electrical rate increase — up to 11.4% per household— is the first of many financial jolts to our personal budgets.

In response, Gov. Hochul has called for the state Public Service Commission to reject the rate increase. That's a good start, but the real culprit lies within the city's well-intentioned but misguided green energy push that outlawed the use of natural gas. We suggest a more reasonable, more realistic approach that acknowledges both the importance of sustainable building and the

need to slow the drive toward green energy so we can ensure our infrastructure is adequately equipped.

We call for the following four steps:

- A temporary suspension of the city's gas ban to prevent future rate increases;
- A creation of a citywide task force of public and private industry leaders to study the feasibility, impact and timeline for all-electric implementation;
- A presentation of the task force's findings in a series of public hearings; and

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- A pledge to explore the use of alternative fuels — such as biodiesel — for building heating options that can help meet the city and state’s clean energy goals.

Natural gas is our most abundant fuel and we need it to protect the essential elements of our society. For example, the state just approved an expansion of the 414-mile Iroquois gas pipeline because other power sources, such as wind, solar and hydro, are not presently viable on any large scale. In the event of another citywide emergency, the impact on the electric grid may mean there will be no redundant heating and cooking source, leading to an unprecedented catastrophe.

The city also must continue to explore the use of biofuels, which offer a low- cost solution for decarbonization and are being deployed to reduce emissions in buildings and vehicle fleets — including the Staten Island Ferry. Biofuels, which are manufactured domestically from vegetable oils and recycled restaurant grease, have been deployed for the past decade and can be expanded immediately in homes and businesses using existing heating systems.

The need for a real conversation on natural gas and biofuels has never been greater, but that dialogue must be based on science, facts and feasibility, not pure politics. We are urging our elected leaders to meet us at the table — so we can learn from this current crisis and prevent one that is even more dire.

Our wallets — and our lives — depend on it.

McIver is the executive director of the Plumbing Foundation, City of New York, a non-profit association representing licensed contracting firms, engineering associations, manufacturers and suppliers. Lacertosa is CEO of the New York State Energy Coalition, Inc. DeLair is the executive director of the Empire State Energy Association, Inc.

Plumbing Foundation Advocates in Albany

The Plumbing Foundation’s Executive and Senior Directors headed to Albany this past February 10 and 11, not surprisingly on a couple of chilly days. Led by their lobbyists at Catalyst Government Relations, they met with New York State Senators and Assemblymembers to discuss the Plumbing Foundation’s state legislative agenda for 2025, which included items from Governor Kathy Hochul’s proposed budget. The Foundation expressed support for thermal energy and hydrogen legislation as well as reforms to insurance including workers compensation to ensure more equitable treatment of employers for wear & tear claims.

The Foundation also advocated for its modular construction legislation, sponsored by Assemblyman Erik Dilan (District 54 - Brooklyn) and Senator Jessica Ramos (District 13 - Queens), which requires New York City modular construction projects to comply with the NYC Building Code licensing standards, regardless of where the modular components are made. That legislation passed both houses in 2022 but was vetoed in December of that year along with hundreds of other bills. The veto memo cited two main points that were, frankly, erroneous; the first included a “potential” impact on affordable housing which we do not believe will be at any meaningful level—there also has been zero reliable sources proving that it would be. The second was the notion that the NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) is already enforcing this requirement. The industry knows the history of modular construction projects in New York City and the DOB’s refusal to enforce licensing standards but rather allow a flawed third-party certification process by any architecture or engineering firm, which tends to be from, according to a Freedom of Information Law (FOIL) request the Foundation conducted, outside of New York. The veto memo also seemed more concerned with out of state contractors over the need for jobs by New York’s own residents and local businesses.



The Foundation once again opposed the NY Home Energy Affordable Transition (HEAT) Act, as it did in 2024 when Governor Hochul introduced a version known as the Affordable Gas Transition Act in her budget (but which was not adopted in the final budget

last year and fortunately was not proposed in her budget this year). Among its provisions, the act proposes to eliminate the 100-foot rule whereby utility companies subsidize new gas hookups. The Plumbing Foundation and similar stakeholders across the state have been in opposition to this bill as this is one of many attempts to speed up the process to get rid of natural gas to reach the goals of the NYS Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). The CLPCA is already on a too ambitious timeline and the state has not properly considered a more reasonable “all the above” approach and rather has been too focused on solar and wind energy, which are not widely available. To quote a 2025 National Fuel memo on the NY HEAT Act, “[t]he CLCPA does not mandate discontinuance of the natural gas system, and the continued operation of a modernized natural gas system paired with low- and no-carbon fuels, hybrid heating and weatherization is entirely consistent with attainment of the statute’s emission reduction goals. Indeed, use of a decarbonized natural gas system will be necessary to achieve these reductions in a responsible way that ensures the continued reliability, resilience and affordability of energy in the State.”

The Foundation’s legislative agenda also included opposition to the Bucks for Boilers Act (banning gas on all buildings above and beyond the 2022 gas ban on new construction) and the Scaffold Law (strict liability for owners and their agents for fall-related accidents).

The Executive and Senior Directors met with legislators from New York City as well as some outside the Big Apple who sit on the Labor Committees in which our modular bill awaits approval. Overall, the meetings were very positive as the elected officials were receptive to the logical and well-thought out agenda. Some of the members that the Foundation met included: Assemblymember Erik Dilan (District 54, Part of Brooklyn), Sen. Jack Martins (R, 7th District, Part of Nassau County), Assemblymember Ed Ra (R, District 19, Part of Nassau), (D, 61st District, Buffalo area) (Labor Committee), Assemblymember Steven Raga (D, District 30, Part of Queens) (Labor Committee), Assemblymember Harry Bronson (D, District 138, Rochester area) (Chair of Labor Committee), Sen. Chris Ryan (D, 50th District, Syracuse area) (Labor Committee), Senator Mario Mattera (R, 2nd District, Part of Suffolk County) (Labor Committee), and Assemblymember Jonathan Rivera (District 149, Buffalo area) (Labor Committee).

The legislature is focused on the budget until its due date of April 1 (which is typically adopted late, including in 2024) and then will continue its regular session days through June. The Plumbing Foundation hopes to make headway on its legislative agenda and will keep the industry apprised of our efforts.

Trump Administration Rescinds NYC Congestion Pricing

On February 19, 2025, the Federal Highway Administration of the U.S. Department of Transportation sent a letter to Governor Kathy Hochul terminating the agreed upon congestion pricing program citing that the "value pricing pilot program" is a narrow exception to the prohibition of tolls on federal highways, and further that the New York program does not offer a toll-free option and the program seems to be driven more for MTA funding than to reduce congestion. Governor Hochul responded in a press conference and at an MTA Board Meeting on February 26th that they are holding strong and keeping the cameras on, and met with President Trump to try and convince him to reverse his decision, citing the program's early success in improving travel times and mass transit ridership. One of the Plumbing Foundation Board Members was quoted in the NY Post on his reaction to the termination of the program, Mr. Paul Belli of Franco Belli Plumbing said he was ecstatic and that “[n]obody needs this. Everyone has high inflation they’re dealing with already.” The MTA has filed a lawsuit challenging the federal government's decision. The City was instructed to end the program by March 21. We will keep the industry updated on the status of the program.

Sources in this article include:

https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/memorandum/VPPPletter_termination_021925.pdf

<https://nypost.com/2025/02/19/us-news/nyc-workers-commuters-rejoice-over-trumps-axing-of-congestion-pricing-toll-im-ecstatic/>

<https://abc7ny.com/post/congestion-pricing-nyc-trump-administration-sets-end-date-new-york-city-tolling-program/15957288/>

Stay Ahead of the Curve.

Carbon Reduction


NYC Local Law 97 Mandate

- NYC LOCAL LAW 97 ENACTED IN 2019
- EMISSIONS LIMITS BEGIN BY 2024
- 40% REDUCTION BY 2030
- 80% REDUCTION BY 2050


Water Conservation

Stormwater Reuse / Sustainable Practice

- DEP MANDATED CONTROLLED RELEASE RATE OF STORMWATER INTO THE CITY MAINS
- SUSTAINABLE DESIGN PRACTICES FOCUSING ON WATER CONSERVATION



Lync by Watts "AEGIS"
CO₂ DHW Heat Pumps



FPS "RainyDay" Rain Water
Harvesting System

COMPLETE SYSTEM SOLUTIONS WITH HANDS-ON SUPPORT FROM DESIGN THROUGH INSTALLATION.

Plumbing & Fire Protection Pumps

Flygt
Grundfos
Peerless Pumps
Stancor

System Fabricators

Envirosep
FPS
Grundfos Engineered Systems (GES)
SyncroFlo
VC Systems & Controls

Water Heaters & Heat Recovery

AERCO
Aldrich
Envirosep
FPS DHWG Series
Hubbell Heaters & DHW Heat Pumps
Lync CO₂ DHW Heat Pumps

Heat Trace & Water Detection

nVent Raychem
nVent Tracetek

Natural Gas & Propane-Air

Spencer Turbine

Valves, Controls, & Accessories

American Valve
Amtrol
Firetrol
Fleetway Water Systems Controller
Flood Mitigation Systems
FPS Sub-Rig
Revere Control Systems
Singer Valves

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Amiad Automatic Filters
Aquafine UV Systems
FPS RainyDay RWH System
Triple Clear Water Solutions



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SERVICE NOTICE

Notices of Deficiency for Failure to Submit Gas Piping System Periodic Inspection Certification for Cycle 1

The NYC Department of Buildings began issuing Notices of Deficiency (NOD) in January 2025, to owners of buildings not classified in Occupancy Group R-3 who failed to submit to DOB a Gas Piping System Periodic Inspection Certification (GPS2) for Cycle 1.

The NOD is listed in the **SAFETY: Violations & Notices of Deficiency** section on the Property Profile. Owners will not be required to pay a penalty for the NOD. However, the NOD will not be dismissed until a GPS2 is submitted for Cycle 2 or a challenge request is approved. Failure to submit a GPS2 by the applicable deadline for Cycle 2 and future four-year cycles will result in a violation being issued and a civil penalty of \$1,500 for 3-family residential buildings and \$5,000 for all other buildings.

Community District	Sub-cycle	Cycle 1 Due Date	Cycle 2 Due Date
1, 3, 10	A	Jan 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021	Jan 1, 2024 - Dec 31, 2024
2, 5, 7, 13, 18	B	Jan 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022	Jan 1, 2025 - Dec 31, 2025
4, 6, 8, 9, 16	C	Jan 1, 2022 - Dec 31, 2022	Jan 1, 2026 - Dec 31, 2026
11, 12, 14, 15, 17	D	Jan 1, 2023 - Dec 31, 2023	Jan 1, 2027 - Dec 31, 2027

Submit the GPS2 for Cycle 2

Submit the GPS2 to DOB at nyc.gov/dobgaspipecert by the due date for Cycle 2.

Submit a Challenge Request

A challenge request may be submitted within 30 days from the date on the NOD. To submit a challenge request, login to nyc.gov/dobnow. If you need to create an account, visit nyc.gov/dobnowtips. Once logged in, select the **DOB NOW: Safety** module and then **Violations**. Select **+Challenge Request** and **Gas Piping**.

Visit the **Periodic Gas Piping System Inspections** web page at nyc.gov/buildings for more information. If you need to report an unsafe condition or have general questions about gas piping inspections, contact the **Plumbing Enforcement Unit** at (212) 393-2557 or LL152of16@buildings.nyc.gov.

Additional Assistance

For additional assistance, submit an inquiry at nyc.gov/dobhelp.

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FOUNDATION
CITY OF NEW YORK**

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Updates and Reminders from DOB

Below are important updates the Plumbing Foundation seeks to share from the NYC Department of Buildings (DOB).

- I. As a reminder, any work under categories 1 and 2 cannot be on the same Limited Alteration Application (LAA) form. This separation of work scope is for both plumbing and fire suppression work. Practically speaking, inspections may overlap considering work under Category 1 and 2 may be within the same workspace, floor, apartment, etc. Please note it is best to make reference to the corresponding LAA Category 1 filing and Category 2 filing to ensure proper DOB inspection coordination occurs.
- II. There is a DOB requirement for a police report when a DOB-issued license is lost or stolen, including even if it is lost in the USPS when the license is issued and sent from the Department. As everyone is aware, including DOB, it is extremely difficult to obtain a police report for a piece of missing mail. Considering licenses are sent to only the valid DOB-established licensee's place of business in the City, the NYPD is the best avenue to report lost mail. If people cannot obtain a police report from their local precinct, there is an NYPD online portal to lodge a complaint including for lost mail. A copy of that complaint is acceptable proof for the DOB to reissue your lost license with the current \$50 administrative fee. The website is <https://nypdonline.org/link/1017%23!#>

THE PLUMBING FOUNDATION'S ENVIRONMENTAL STATEMENT

Since its establishment in 1986, the Plumbing Foundation has worked diligently to ensure the plumbing industry has as little a "carbon footprint" on New York City as possible. The plumbing industry has historically utilized environmentally friendly materials such as recycled cast-iron and copper piping/fittings. The Foundation will continue in its role of protecting New York City as well as being an advocate for the environment by strengthening its water/sanitary regulations and thereby reducing wasteful water consumption in the City.

Resolve to Save Water All Year in 2025!



Ring in the new year with a resolution to practice water conservation throughout 2025, by taking the “I’m for Water” pledge at www.epa.gov/watersense/im-water-pledge. To keep your resolution and save water, energy, and money, check out these simple steps each month.

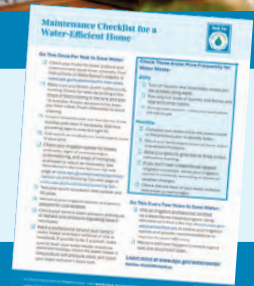
January 2025

- I will [review my water bill](#) to better understand how much water we use at home and if we might be wasting it.
- I will look for new ways to save water by reviewing the [WaterSense website](#).



February 2025

- I will download the [WaterSense Maintenance Checklist for a Water-Efficient Home](#) and keep it handy to help save all year.
- If I am in the market for a new home, I will look for a [WaterSense labeled home](#) that can save 50,000 gallons of water per year or more.



March 2025

- I will celebrate [Fix a Leak Week](#) March 17 through 23 by taking the [10-Minute Challenge](#) to find and fix any leaks in my home.
- I will [test my toilet for leaks](#) by placing a few drops of food coloring in the tank and replace the flapper if color shows up in the bowl.



April 2025

- I will complete a walk-through of my irrigation system—or use a certified professional—to [spruce up my sprinklers](#) before summer.
- I will replace missing or broken [spray sprinkler bodies](#) with WaterSense labeled models that save water.



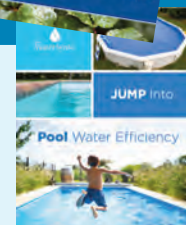
May 2025

- When updating my garden, I will choose [regionally appropriate plants](#) that require less watering and add mulch to reduce evaporation.
- I will try the [cycle-and-soak method](#) and divide irrigation runtimes into small intervals with breaks to allow water to soak into the soil.



June 2025

- If I own a pool, I will make sure it isn't a source of water waste this summer by using a [pool cover](#) to avoid evaporation.
- When shopping for plumbing products, I will [look for the WaterSense label](#) to select models certified to save water and perform well.



July 2025

- I will install a [WaterSense labeled weather-based or soil moisture-based irrigation controller](#) to schedule watering only when needed.
- During Smart Irrigation Month, I will only [water](#) in the mornings or evenings when temperatures are coolest to avoid evaporation.



August 2025

- I will make sure I know if there is a [drought in my area](#) so I can take water-saving actions during dry weather.
- I will send my kids back to school with more water conservation knowledge by using [WaterSense's resources for kids](#).



September 2025

- To prepare for cooler fall weather, I will check my [irrigation controller](#) settings to make sure I am only watering when needed.
- I will share WaterSense's [homeowner association resources](#) with my community and work together to reduce outdoor water use.



October 2025

- During Energy Awareness Month, I will install [WaterSense labeled bathroom fixtures](#) that use less hot water and save energy.
- I will celebrate Shower Better Month by installing [WaterSense labeled showerheads](#) to save water, energy, and money on utility bills.



November 2025

- I will celebrate World Toilet Day by testing my toilet for leaks and replacing it with a [WaterSense labeled model](#) if needed.
- When hosting for the holidays, I will scrape food into the trash instead of using the garbage disposal and [run the dishwasher only when full](#).



December 2025

- I will give the gift of water savings by finding [WaterSense labeled products](#) for the do-it-yourselfer in our home.
- I will resolve to save water in 2026 by renewing my "I'm for Water" pledge.



For more ideas about saving water, visit the [WaterSense website](#) at www.epa.gov/watersense or follow us on social media.

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Thanks for turning to black and red for decades. We're proud to be part of your incredible city. Without you, NYC wouldn't be the same, and neither would we.

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Does Your Company have a 401(k) Plan?

In 2023, the Department of Labor:

- Audited 731 Retirement Plans
- 69% were fined
- Total fines collected \$1.4 billion

The average fine was **\$ 2.8 million** per plan.

Are you exposed?

Source: Employee Benefit Security Administration

Find out how to protect yourself by having a full review of your plan and learning how our **specialty discounted** Plumbing Foundation - City of New York 401(k) Program might be a cost effective way to protect yourself.



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