

MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING: CLEAN, HEALTHY & AFFORDABLE

Washington needs to dedicate funding so residents of affordable, multi-family housing can reap the benefits of living in clean and healthy, electric buildings.

We spend the majority of our lives inside buildings, many of which run on fossil gas—a health, climate, and equity disaster. **Studies show that 12.7% of childhood asthma in the U.S. is linked to living in a home with a gas stove.**¹ Buildings have become the sector with the fastest-growing rate of emissions in Washington.

¹<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9819315/>

We must make it easier for building owners to invest in decarbonization upgrades for affordable MFH while protecting low-income residents.

Low-income customers are the least able to transition off gas, and for tenants of affordable, multi-family housing (MFH) it is largely up to building owners to make this transition.



Achieving climate targets

Multi-family buildings have large carbon footprints and, without a dedicated program, risk being laggards in the transition off gas. To reduce climate impacts today and in the future, we need large buildings to be part of the solution.



Reaching equity goals

Affordable MFH buildings house some of the highest-need Washingtonians who may be low- or moderate income, rent or energy burdened, or come from overburdened or vulnerable communities. With the help of this program, more residents can benefit from cleaner and healthier buildings.



Investing in retrofits

Our state seeks to decarbonize housing, as well as to reserve existing affordable housing and to maintain affordable energy costs. Funds are necessary to ensure all these goals can be achieved. The Washington Legislature should invest **\$100 million for multi-family affordable housing decarbonization incentives for energy efficiency upgrades and electrification retrofits.** This funding will be flexible and can be used for outreach, planning, and technical assistance.



Meeting a unique challenge

Building owners need funding to assess and plan for retrofits, and for technical assistance throughout the project that is customized to their building. We need provisions to protect tenants from increased rents resulting from owners passing along costs. To access funds, building owners must commit to maintaining affordable rents. This budget proviso should address these specific needs and go further to enable this transition than current programs allow.