

Master Plumbers disappointed with Victorian Government's announcement to ban gas connections in new homes.

Master Plumbers has expressed concern and disappointment about the Victorian Government announcement today to ban new gas connections to homes.

The announcement to refuse planning permits for new homes and residential subdivisions which want to connect to gas from 1 January 2024 was made without consultation and is short on details.

Master Plumbers CEO Peter Daly said that the Victorian Government had let the industry and consumers down when making far-reaching changes to policy.

"Plumbing businesses design, install and maintain the critical infrastructure which Victorians rely on to safely and securely go about their daily lives," Mr. Daly said.

"For the Government to drop an announcement like this without any substantive consultation is disappointing but unfortunately not surprising given previous changes to regulation of the industry which proved to be unworkable.

Mr Daly. said that it was difficult to understand how promises could be made about energy savings without engaging with the very businesses which help consumers and building managers make informed choices in homes, workplaces and public spaces about heating, cooling, hot water and cooking.

"Our members are on the ground helping people reduce their carbon footprint and they see the limitations and costs that can come from choices which don't deliver on their expectations. It would be entirely understandable if consumers are becoming cynical about more government announcements on future energy savings when all they see is their bills increasing and options being restricted."

Mr Daly said that the plumbing industry is at the forefront of the clean energy transition to a low carbon economy and is developing further skills, infrastructure and technology to support this, including development of 100% carbon neutral hydrogen and bio-gas energy sources for use in the existing distribution network.

"The only welcome part of today's announcement is the stated recognition from the Victorian Government that plumbers (and electricians) will be the key to delivering this critical transition."

"We certainly agree, but you would think that this would mean consulting with business rather than creating uncertainty and confusion, especially amongst the many family, small and medium businesses which are the largest part of the sector."

Mr Daly said the commitment from the government to training was welcomed, but it fell far short.

"The promise of only \$1 million in new funding to assist the entire construction industry deliver what the Government has promised in this announcement is completely unrealistic.

"We want to work with government on the clean energy transition, but it needs to work on its engagement with industry."

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