

Survey conversation guide

This conversations guide is designed to help you prepare and build great connections with everyone you talk to. It contains a suggested conversation structure and handy questions and answers. It's not a script, so don't worry about memorising it.

Objectives:

- **Shift hearts and minds** – have meaningful, open conversations with people who are neutral on this issue
- **Inform our strategy** – learn what people know about gas and what information and ideas they respond to
- **Build our power** – bring new people into our campaign by signing them up to take action!

Opening & develop a connection

Hi, my name's [X], I volunteer with Environment Victoria, an environmental campaigning organisation. Our volunteers work together across Victoria to push for solutions to climate change that work for everyone.

We're having conversations with people here about gas. Are you up for a quick conversation with me?

I'm interested in your thoughts on climate change generally – how concerned are you about climate impacts?

Validate concerns

Question 1 - Their opinion on gas

I'm going to ask a couple of simple questions about gas but first I want to understand how you generally feel about gas, or rather, getting rid of gas.

On a scale of 1 – 10, how supportive are you for Victoria switching away from gas altogether by 2035? (1 = we should use more gas, 10 = all homes and businesses should run off electric appliances and we should phase out all gas use)

Tell me more, why did you put yourself there?

Validate concerns

The reason I'm here speaking with people is because I'm really concerned about the impacts of gas. Gas is a major source of pollution for the climate and for our lungs when we use it in our homes. And you might have heard that Victoria's gas is running out, which forces us to choose – will we keep trying to drill for more gas or bring in fracked gas from somewhere else, or will we phase it out?

In my mind, the solution is easy – to switch to efficient, electric appliances powered by renewable energy. This could be switching the gas heating in our homes for electric reverse cycle air conditioners, or from gas to heat pump hot water.

So, I personally would love to see every home in Victoria powered by clean renewable energy instead of gas. But I'm interested in your thoughts.

Question 2 - What concerns them about gas

Which of the following concern you about gas use? (Tick all that apply)

- Rising gas bills
- Giant gas companies making record profits while everyday people suffer
- Climate pollution
- Health impacts from burning gas in our homes
- None of that concerns me

Depending on answers follow up to validate or introduce a fact – see below.

- **Growing bills**
 - Gas prices just keep going up and up and the rises are steepest and most highly concentrated here in Victoria. Recently gas companies including AGL, Origin, and EnergyAustralia announced another hike with household gas bills to increase on average \$480 a year, depending on usage.
- **Companies profit, we pay**
 - Totally, giant gas companies like Santos are making record profits right now from trashing our planet while our energy bills go through the roof. They are running scare campaigns and pushing false solutions to keep digging and burning gas as long as they can.
- **Climate pollution**
 - Yes, Gas is responsible for 17% of Victoria's climate pollution. If the gas industry gets its way, by 2035 gas will be Victoria's biggest source of climate pollution.
- **Health impacts from burning gas in our homes**
 - Our parents and grandparents were told by the gas industry itself that gas was the best way to cook and to heat our homes. But new research backed by the Asthma Foundation shows burning gas for cooking and heating can be as dangerous as second-hand cigarette smoke, causing heart disease and around 12 percent of childhood asthma.
- **None of that concerns me**
 - Sure, can you tell me a bit about why you're not worried about gas....

Invite them to share a story

Have you personally experienced any of these things?

Do you know someone impacted by [rising energy costs / asthma]?

Listen closely, ask curious questions to move beyond opinion and into experience and story. Emphasise/reflect on any shared experiences between the two of you.

Question 3 - Solutions to switch away from gas

We're already seeing a lot of people make the choice to switch away from gas in their homes, but not everyone is able to do that for a range of reasons. We are gathering the top things people want to see government representatives pushing for and will be passing this on to Victorian MPs [name local MP].

Which of the following options would you most like to see your local MP pushing for to help with switching your community off gas? I'll read them out and let me know what you think is the best option:

- Financial support for households like rebates and interest-free loans for electric appliances
- More accessible information about how to replace gas with efficient electric appliances (retrofitting our homes)
- Opportunities to be part of bulk buys of electric appliances or sharing info & resources with your neighbours
- Measures to make gas companies pay tax and not block solutions to reducing gas use
- Or something else, another idea you have... (note it down)

Question 4 - Living situation

Do you rent, own your own home, live in social housing, or something else? Do you live in an apartment?

Gauge their opinion again to see if their position has changed

I'm hearing that you care about these issues. I heard you say **[summarise their main concerns]**.

So I'm interested to hear how you'd rate yourself on the scale question now. How supportive are you for Victoria switching away from gas altogether by 2035?

Ask them to take action

We have a petition calling on the Premier and the Energy Minister to make it easier for all of us to get off gas – and enjoy cleaner air and lower bills.

Victorians are ready to switch off gas, but for many households the upfront costs of switching are too high or they don't get to choose because of renting or living in apartments. That's why we need the Victorian government to step up.

Will you sign the petition? **Thank them for their time.**