



**2021**

# MEASURING THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF THE U.S. ENERGY TRANSITION



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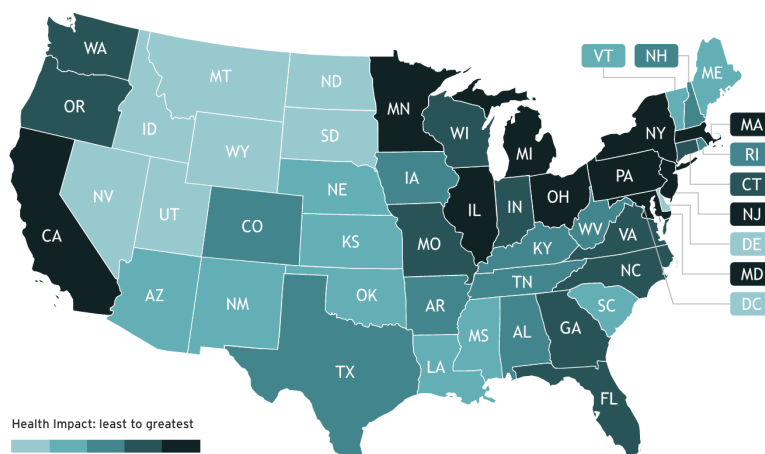
Our research led by Jonathan Buonocore found that burning natural gas, biomass, and wood now have more negative health impacts than burning coal in many states, and is a trend that may continue. The study published in [Environmental Research Letters](#) provided the first inventory of air pollution health impacts over the past decade from stationary sources like coal plants, gas plants, industrial boilers, and commercial and residential buildings.

## GOAL

Our health and energy policies are inextricably linked. Our goal was to inform policymakers considering how to regulate building emissions and increase building electrification that gas, biomass, and wood are not clean or healthy alternative energy sources to coal. Wind, solar, and other non-fuel combusting renewable energy are the healthiest energy sources available for generating electricity, powering our factories, and heating our homes.

## STRATEGY

We worked with RMI and Energy Media to develop key messages, web content, maps, a social media campaign, and a press release with state-specific findings to brief policymakers, advocates, and funders, and pitch state and national media to amplify the study's findings.



From [RMI](#), What is the health impact of buildings in your state?



"Swapping out one combustion fuel for another is not a pathway that's going to get us to a healthy energy system."

JONATHAN BUONOCORE  
RESEARCH SCIENTIST  
HARVARD CHAN C-CHANGE

## RESULTS

Our work appeared in 80 news stories, including Canary Media, Chicago Tribune, Common Dreams, Drilled News and podcast, E&E (leading story in Greenwire), Earther, Energy News Network, Fast Company, Grist, HuffPost, Inside Climate News, Inside EPA, LA Times, New Yorker, Politico Morning Energy newsletter, and WBEZ, helping shift the national conversation on the energy transition to emphasize the need to leapfrog directly to clean energy.

We briefed EPA staff and over 100 stakeholders on the increasing share of health impacts from burning gas, biomass, and wood in buildings and other stationary sources.

The study was downloaded over 43,000 times from Environmental Research Letters.

## IMPACT

Our work reached broad audiences and informed policymaking at the state and national levels. The study was cited in Rewiring America Plan: Rewiring Communities, used by Senator Martin Heinrich (D-NM) to introduce the Zero-Emission Homes Act, and was included in legislative testimony and advocate comments on gas policy in Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Michigan. The study was retweeted by the California Energy Commission and the California Air Resources Board.

