

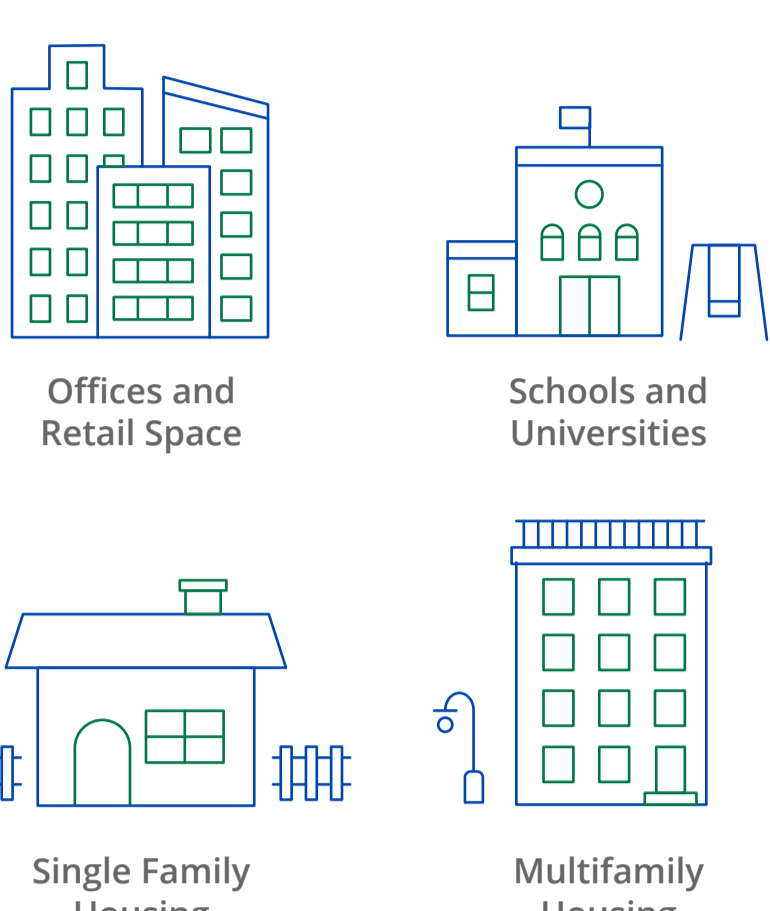
Building Seattle Better

Why Phasing Out Fossil Fuels is Critical to Our Health and Resiliency

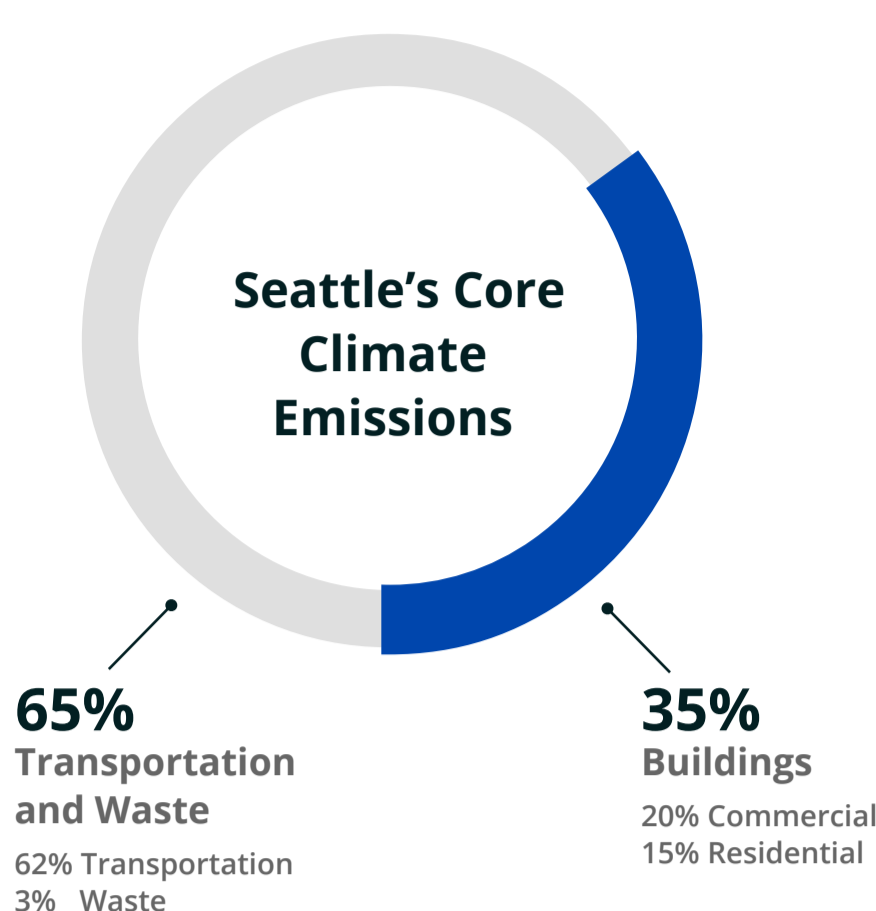


Buildings are one of the largest and fastest-growing sources of Seattle's climate emissions.

Burning fossil fuels in buildings where we live and work harm people and the environment.



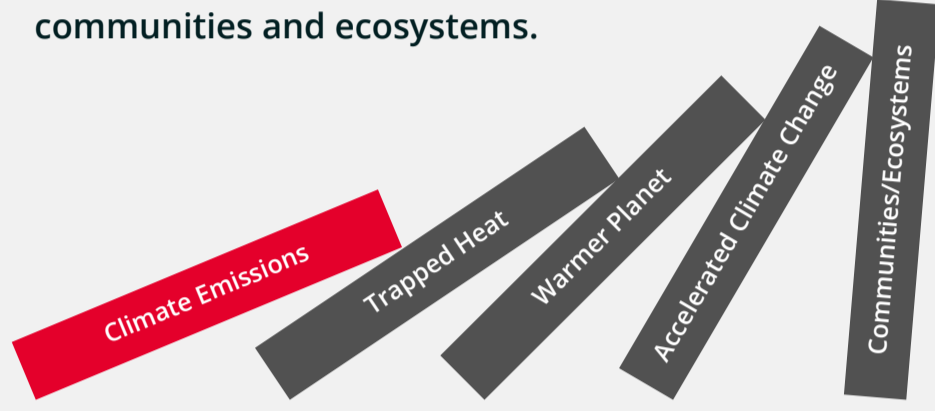
More than 1/3 of Seattle's core climate emissions are from the building sector.¹



Climate emissions have a negative domino effect on communities and our health.

These emissions are greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide (CO₂), which are released into the air by burning fossil fuels.

Emissions trap heat inside the earth's atmosphere—warming our planet, accelerating climate change, and leading to **destructive impacts** on communities and ecosystems.



Exposure to air pollution from burning fossil fuels accounted for nearly **1 out of 5 deaths** in 2018.²

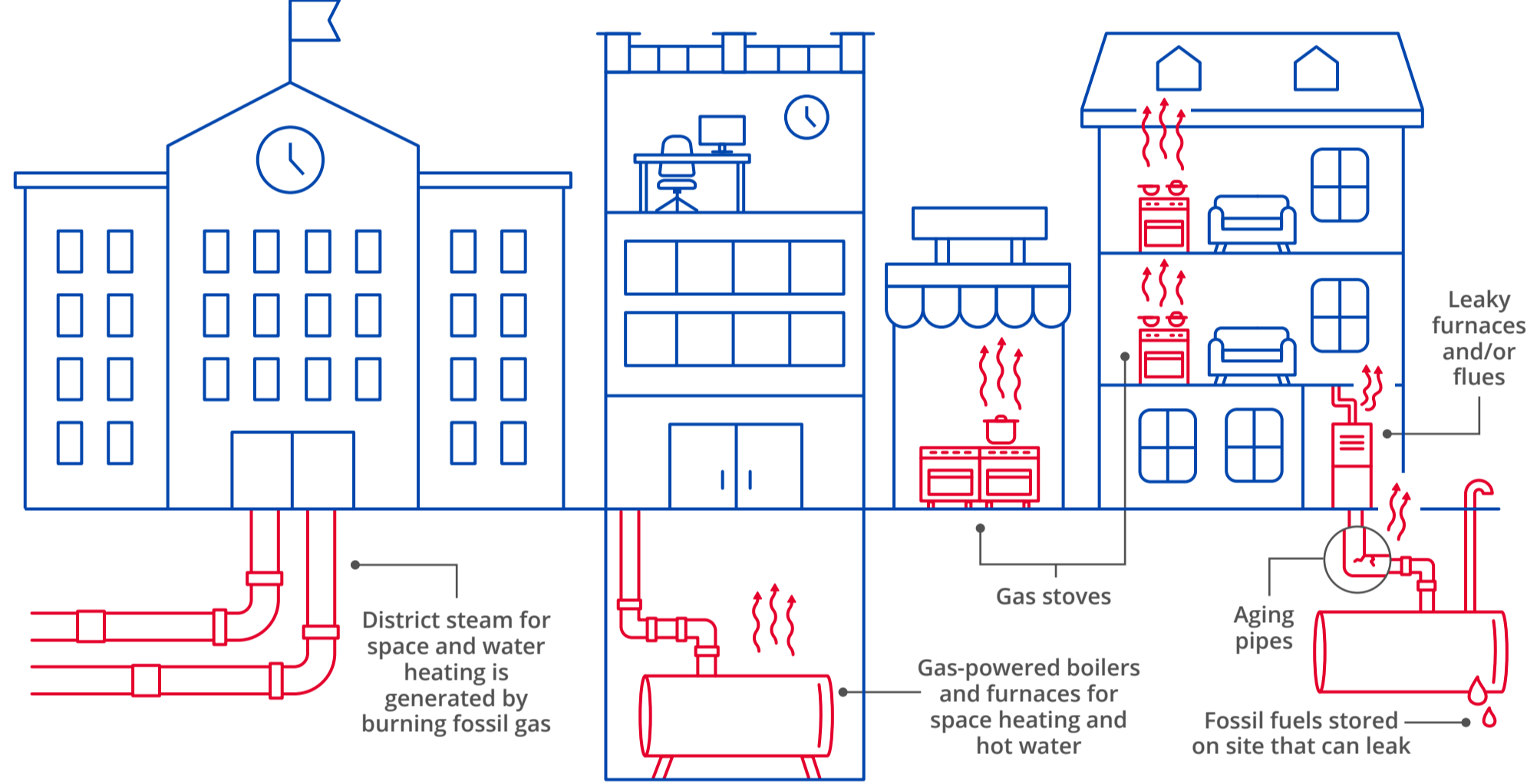


Our health depends on eliminating **fossil fuels and their pollutants.**



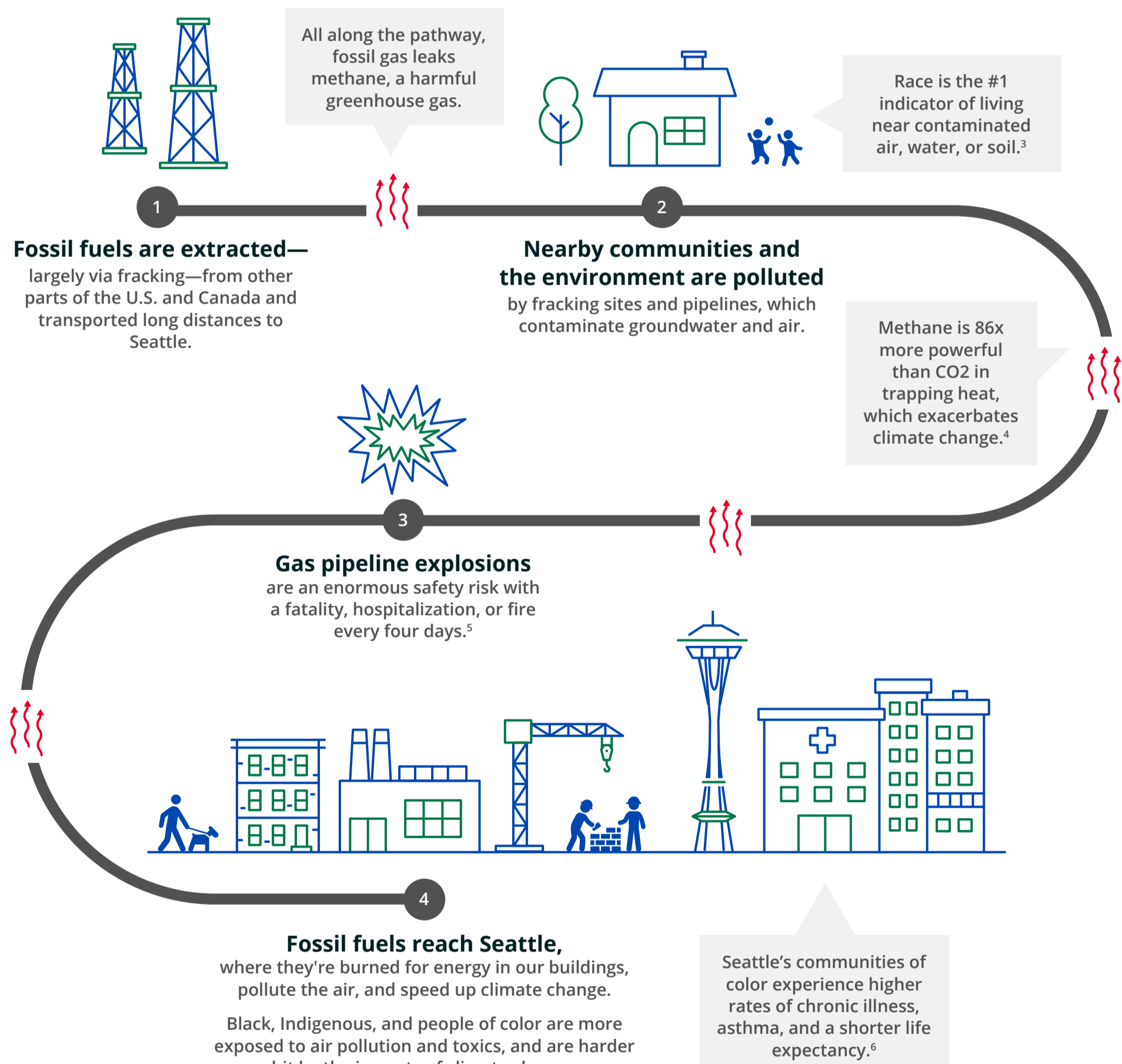
Buildings burn fossil fuels and release emissions in a number of ways.

Over 90% of building emissions comes from burning fossil fuels like fracked gas and oil for furnaces, water heaters, and appliances.



Continuing to power our buildings with fossil fuels is an issue of climate justice.

Fossil fuels cause harm along every step of the pathway to our buildings and homes, and disproportionately impact communities of color.



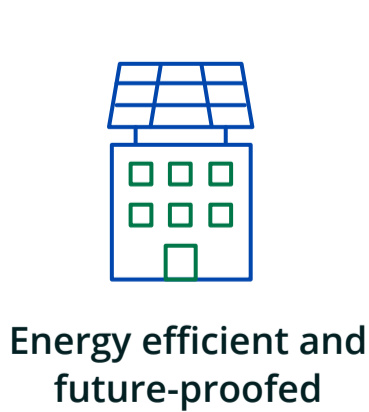
We can build Seattle better —

free from the harmful health and climate impacts of fossil fuels.

How?

Electrify all new buildings and retrofit existing buildings to replace fossil fuels with clean, locally sourced electricity.

We all benefit from:



Learn more

seattle.gov/environment/climate-change/buildings-and-energy

Contact us

cleanbuildings@seattle.gov



Seattle Office of Sustainability & Environment

¹ Seattle Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory, 2018.

² Global mortality from outdoor fine particle pollution generated by fossil fuel combustion: Results from GEOS-Chem, Environmental Research, Volume 195, 2021.

³ Bryce Covert, "Racism and Discrimination Race Best Predicts Whether You Live Near Pollution," The Nation, February 18, 2016, <http://www.thenation.com/article/race-best-predicts-whether-you-live-near-pollution/>.

⁴ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

⁵ Building Electrification Action Plan for Climate Leaders, Sierra Club, December 2019, <https://www.sierraclub.org/sites/www.sierraclub.org/files/Building%20Action%20Plan%20for%20Climate%20Leaders.pdf>.

⁶ Linn Gould and BJ Cummings, Duwamish Valley Cumulative Health Impacts Analysis, Seattle, WA: Just Health Action and Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition/Technical Advisory Group, March 2013, <http://justhealthaction.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Duwamish-Valley-Cumulative-Health-Impacts-Analysis-Seattle-WA.pdf>.

Building Seattle Better

How We're Moving to a Clean Energy Future



Our goal is to reduce climate emissions 40% by 2030, and be net-zero carbon by 2050.

To do this, we must power more of our lives and buildings with clean energy and adopt energy efficiency measures.

Proven Strategies to Cut Emissions



Energy Benchmarking
Tracks annual energy performance of commercial buildings (20,000 sf and above) and identifies ways to save energy, emissions, and costs.



State Energy Performance Standards
Implements energy efficiency targets for existing commercial buildings (greater than 50,000 sf) to meet over time.



Commercial Building Tune-Ups
Optimizes energy and water efficiency for commercial buildings (50,000 sf and above) at low or no cost to achieve 10 to 15 percent energy savings.



Seattle Building Performance Standards
Sets emissions targets for existing commercial and multifamily buildings (20,000 sf and above) to transition to clean energy over time.



Seattle Commercial Energy Code
Ensures new commercial and large multifamily buildings are energy efficient from the start and removes most fossil fuels.

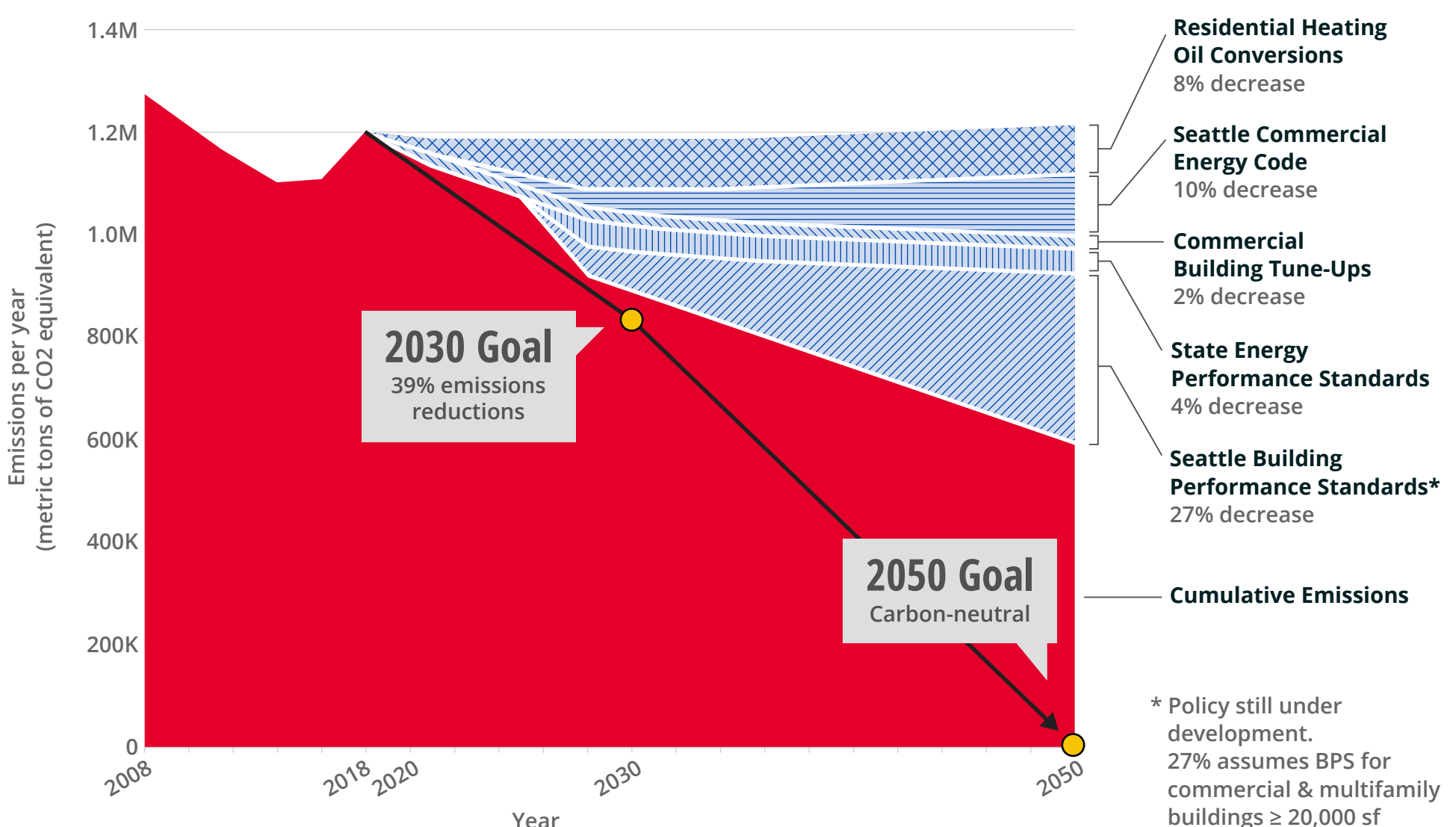


Residential Heating Oil Conversions
Converts oil-fired heating systems to electric in residential homes, with financial support for households with low incomes.

Together, these strategies help us meet our climate goals.

Projected Seattle Buildings Emissions Reductions

This diagram illustrates the role that each strategy plays in bringing Seattle to carbon neutrality. Each wedge indicates how emissions are projected to decrease against a business as usual scenario without these actions.



Learn more

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