

**Why getting buildings off gas now is good for consumers [Prepared by Office of Peoples Counsel]**

Enacted in 2013, the Strategic Infrastructure Development and Enhancement Plan (STRIDE) law permits Maryland’s gas distribution utilities to submit five-year infrastructure replacement plans to the Maryland Public Service Commission for expedited cost recovery. **It allows gas utilities to add a monthly surcharge on customer bills to recover the estimated costs of replacement projects** with or before the execution of the projects - an easier and faster method for gas utilities to recover these infrastructure costs from ratepayers.

Annual STRIDE-only gas infrastructure costs have risen each year since 2014. **In 2022, the cost is \$150 million, with future ANNUAL costs rising to a peak of over \$450 million in 2044.** These costs will be born by ratepayers as a surcharge on their bills. This is in addition to any other base rate increases permitted by the Public Service Commission. Bottom line, why should ratepayers foot the bill for leaking gas infrastructure when a better plan for the climate and people is to transition off of gas before 2044.

