



# Biomass North Development Centre

December 15, 2016

Premier Kathleen Wynne  
Minister Glenn Thibeault, Energy  
Minister Glen Murray, Environment & Climate Change  
Minister Michael Gravelle, Northern Development & Mines  
Minister Kathryn McGarry, Natural Resources & Forestry  
Minister David Zimmer, Indigenous Relations & Reconciliation

Ontario Leaders,

Biomass North Development Centre is a sector association with members who have been engaged and working in northern Ontario to identify and support biomass and bioenergy development, some of us for decades, as academics, experts, business leaders, and members of non-governmental organizations. It was with some surprise and great disappointment that we [read](#) of the Ontario Governments support of, and plan to, invest significant taxpayers' dollars in an LNG scheme in northern Ontario.

We understand the desperation of our northern communities to reduce energy costs, especially when 80% of household energy use is for heat. In northern Ontario, energy poverty is endemic and rising. High electricity rates, coupled with volatile fossil fuel costs, have resulted in many citizens choosing between heat and other necessities for their family. It is a grave situation that has only gotten worse in the past decade.

We cannot express enough how the province investing \$220M+ of our tax dollars in a "southern solution to a northern problem" is the wrong path to take.

LNG, like all natural gas products, is a fossil fuel. It is arguably "cleaner" than diesel or propane, but it is NOT the best GHG-reduction solution. It is also not a solution that drives optimal economic development, creates the most long-term jobs, revives our forestry sector, nor reduces the greatest amount of GHG emissions. It is not the heating solution we need in the north.

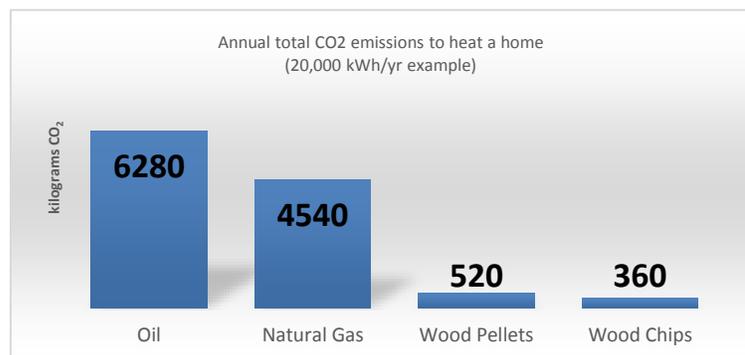


Figure - GHG Emissions from different heating fuel types Source: Biomass Energy Centre  
[http://www.biomassenergycentre.org.uk/portal/page?\\_pageid=75,163182&\\_dad=portal&\\_schema=PORTAL](http://www.biomassenergycentre.org.uk/portal/page?_pageid=75,163182&_dad=portal&_schema=PORTAL)

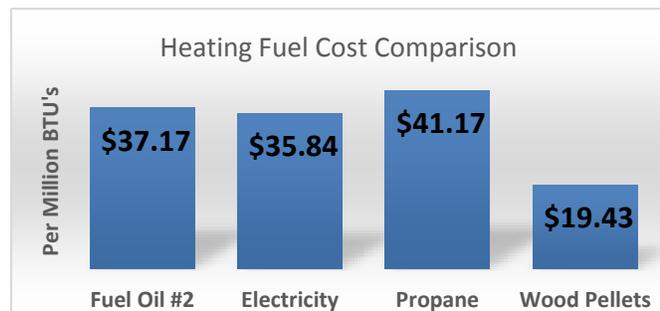


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Investing in fossil fuel infrastructure, such as the LNG compression/distribution plant and equipment, will actually increase the risk of harm to northern communities. As we saw in a tragic diesel tanker accident that occurred in New Liskeard on [November 24<sup>th</sup>](#), trucking highly flammable fossil fuels on our northern roads, particularly in winter, can result in catastrophic incidents that cause loss of life, jeopardize our waterways, and strangle the shipment of goods and movement of citizens.

Investing in fossil fuel infrastructure locks the province into a fossil fuel future. It forces the Ontario taxpayer to subsidize the fossil fuel industry's expansion throughout northern Ontario, when the province has committed to reducing our GHG emissions and protecting our natural resources.

The optimal solution, as demonstrated in Vermont, Maine, British Columbia, Quebec, Finland and many other jurisdictions with similar resources and geographic challenges as northern Ontario, is modern wood heating using carbon-neutral local wood. As well as dramatically reducing heating costs for these communities, modern wood heating will better assist the province in meeting its Climate Change Action Plan goals and the mandates of several Ministries:



Fuel Cost Comparison Spreadsheet: Energy Information Agency, US Government. <http://www.eia.gov/tools/faqs/heatcalc.xls>

- Drive economic development in the north
- Support First Nations' economic goals through sharing resource benefits
- Create local high-value jobs
- Revive the forestry sector through better utilization of our forest resources

We ask the government to take a step back and weigh all the options available to achieve its mandate, select the optimal solution set that most benefits businesses, communities, and citizens of northern Ontario, and level the playing field for proven cost-effective options that do NOT lock the north into a fossil fuel future.

Sincerely,

Dawn Lambe  
Executive Director