

‘Statenwarmte’ ... free your home from natural gas

Free your home from natural gas in a few years! If you disconnect your natural gas-based boiler, how will you heat your house during cold days? And what are the alternatives for warm tapwater and cooking on a gas stove? Together we will explore your options.

Important milestones: 2030 and 2021

The Hague municipality wants to disconnect all buildings in the city from the natural gas network by 2030 and switch to sustainable energy sources such as solar, geo thermal, water and wind energy. (website denhaag.nl) By 2021 an energy transition plan is to be set for all areas in The Hague that specifies which sustainable sources are to replace natural gas. The plan will also outline how to deal with heating homes and tapwater and natural gas-free cooking.

Why natural gas-free: CO2 emissions and earthquakes in ‘Groningen’

CO2 emissions cause climate change and temperatures are rising worldwide. This change along with other factors is expected to cause rising sea levels in the coming years. To counter the effects of climate change, the Netherlands agreed in 2016 to reduce CO2 emissions by 2050 (Paris Climate Agreement). The climate agreement is an important driver for change in our energy management. The earthquakes in Groningen, however, caused by natural gas extraction have accelerated the decision to become less dependent on natural gas. Climate change and earthquakes are two important reasons to think about natural gas-free heating.

Research on heating: ‘Statenwarmte’

The past seven years ‘Buurtenergie Statenkwartier’ (BES), a neighbourhood energy association of residents in the ‘Statenkwartier’ has already taken several initiatives (e.g. solar panels and insulating houses). BES aims to make our homes more sustainable. One of BES’s recent ideas was to pro-actively and collaboratively with neighbourhood residents, develop its own local heating plan named ‘Statenwarmte’. The district council (‘Wijkoverleg’) of the Statenkwartier approved of this idea and has now formally commissioned the initiative. The necessary research for ‘Statenwarmte’ entails an exploration of different options for future heating in houses without natural gas in conversation with residents. The research will result in a ‘heating plan’.

Your preferences for natural gas-free heating?

Our homes were built in a time when there was no central heating. Many homes had oil or coal stoves and usually only the living room was heated. In the 1960s, the natural gas grid was built and most homes became centrally heated. The water temperature from central heating is about 80 to 90 degrees Celsius which is warm enough for cold winters. Now we have to start thinking about what kind of heating suits our homes. What temperature do we need to keep it comfortably warm? And if we first insulate our house, can we lower the temperature? The advantage of well-insulated houses is also that we have more options between heat sources. Moreover, do we want a collective system for the whole neighbourhood, like the current gas grid, or do we want a solution shared only with our immediate neighbors? Or maybe even a heat source only for our own home? These are some of the many questions which ‘Statenwarmte’ hopes to answer with your help.

Some examples

In an article in the previous Statenkoerier (see the Dutch version on this website) I wrote about the heating network and geothermal energy and about what you can already do, regardless of solutions that will be available the coming years, such as insulation and solar panels. The heating network discussed in the article is an example of a collective solution. Another option is heat-cold storage where the shallow warmth of the earth is used to heat your home. In contrast to geothermal energy (high temperature), lower temperatures are involved and therefore better insulation is required, as well as different radiators or floor heating.

A third possibility is electric heating such as a heat pump or infrared panels.

If you are interested, on the website statenwarmte.nl you will find ‘fact sheets’ with more information. You can also find more information on milieucentraal.nl and hierverwarmt.nl.

Steps to take

We have started preparing the research. We hope to report mid-April 2019 about what is technically possible and which preferences most of you have. Based on this consultation we will deliberate further steps.

Roughly, the research consists of:

1. research into the technical and financial (im)possibilities to sustainably heat our homes
2. interviews with local residents to determine their priorities regarding a future heat solution.
3. community meetings to discuss the results with each other and to find out which solutions gain most support from residents
4. creating a network of residents to implement one or more solutions.

What actions are already available

Are you impatient and want to prepare your home for the future? Or you are interested in the subject and want to know more? Or would you possibly like to commit yourself to Statenwarmte as an ambassador? These are some of the possibilities:

- preparing a home: insulate your home, put solar panels on your roof, install floor heating, switch to induction instead of cooking on natural gas. These measures help to make your home 'natural gas-resilient'.
- if you want to know more, you can visit the website statenwarmte.nl
- on the website you will also find more information about how you can become an 'ambassador'

Feel free to contact us personally during our newly introduced weekly consultation hour ('Spreekuur'). Time and location can be found on the website statenwarmte.nl.

Execution of research

The research is being carried out by Publieke Versnellers and the Instituut Maatschappelijke Innovatie with the support of BES, the municipality of The Hague, the province of South Holland and Sustainable The Hague. More information can be found on www.statenwarmte.nl.

Planning

	aug. 18	sep. 18	okt. 18	nov. 18	dec. 18	jan. 19	feb. 19	mrt. 19	apr. 19
Technical and financial assessment									
Interviews with local residents									
Community meetings									
Creating a network									
Presentation of results									

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