

## **Empty Gas Canisters Turned to Better Use**

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In a sign of the deep energy crisis facing Kyrgyzstan, people in the southern Batken region have found a new use for gas cylinders they fear will never be filled again.

Alukbu Amirova reports that local blacksmiths are now doing a roaring trade in crafting makeshift wood-burning stoves or “burzhuyki” out of compressed-gas canisters which have lain empty for so long that people are having them converted to a more practical purpose.

Dependent on neighbouring Uzbekistan for supplies of natural gas, the Kyrgyz south suffers chronic shortages of both gas and domestically-generated electricity.

One blacksmith said the cylinders were ideal because they were made out of high-quality steel. There are suspicions that some artisans have become a little too enterprising – going round houses to appropriate canisters that have been left lying around.

Many customers are happy to bring their own cylinders in for a conversion job, though. As one woman told IWPR, “When will I need it again? When is there ever going to be gas in Batken again?”

**Location:** [Uzbekistan](#)  
[Kyrgyzstan](#)

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