

WINTER SPARE^{the}AIR



CHECK BEFORE YOU BURN. SpareTheAir.org or 1-877-4-NO BURN

Wood Smoke and Health Impacts

- Wood smoke is a major source of wintertime air pollution in the Bay Area.
- Wood smoke contains harmful air pollutants including particulate matter, carbon monoxide, and toxins like dioxin, which is linked to increased cancer rates in adults.
- Smoke from wood-burning fireplaces and stoves contain fine particulate matter that lingers in the air and is so small that our bodies' natural defenses cannot filter it out. Instead, we inhale it deeply into our lungs, where it can become lodged and pass into the bloodstream.
- In the wintertime, air cools and sinks close to the ground. When there is no wind to disperse pollutants from fireplaces, they become trapped close to the ground and can build up to unhealthy levels, making it difficult for people with asthma and other respiratory conditions to breathe.
- Smoke from wood-burning fires is linked to illnesses such as asthma, bronchitis and lung disease, and is especially harmful for children and the elderly.
- Wood-burning fires not only lead to pollution in your community, but they also pollute the air quality inside your home where it can affect your family.

New Rule

- On November 1, 2008 the Bay Area Air District will begin enforcing the Wood Burning Rule that prohibits burning wood on high pollution days when the Air District declares a *Winter Spare the Air Alert*, in order to limit the harmful health impacts of wood smoke.
- Each day around 10:00 a.m., the Air District will forecast air pollution levels for the Bay Area. If the air quality is determined to be unhealthy, they will declare a *Winter Spare the Air Alert*.
- On average, there are 15-20 *Winter Spare the Air Alerts* each winter (November – February).
- During a *Winter Spare the Air Alert*, the use of any and all wood-burning devices, including fireplaces, pellet stoves, wood stoves, fireplace inserts and outdoor fire pits is illegal.
- Those who burn wood during *Winter Spare the Air Alerts* will receive a warning for the first violation. A second violation could result in a fine of several hundred to several thousand dollars depending on the severity of the infraction. *
- Residents should check the air-quality status before using wood-burning devices.
 - The daily burn status can be found:
 - ⇒ On the Air District Web sites: www.baaqmd.gov or www.sparetheair.org
 - ⇒ Via a toll-free telephone hotline (1-877-4-NO-BURN)
 - ⇒ By signing up for AirAlerts at www.sparetheair.org

What You Can Do To Reduce Wood Smoke Pollution

- Check before you burn by calling 1-877-4NO- BURN or by visiting www.sparetheair.org.
- Switch to a gas fireplace or insert.
- Be sure your home is properly weatherized to use energy in the most efficient way.
- When burning is allowed, burn only short hot fires using clean, dry wood.
- Never burn garbage, plastics, glossy paper or wood that has been painted or treated.

* People who burn wood as their sole source of heat and do not have natural gas service are exempt from the regulation.