



# NEWS

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**For Immediate Release**

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## **Give Thanks for Healthy Air!**

In an effort to maintain healthy air throughout the winter months, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) is asking residents to refrain from using their fireplaces this holiday season. For many, using the fireplace when loved ones gather is a tradition; however, particles in wood smoke can cause breathing difficulties for those both inside and outside of the home. Wood smoke also generates toxic air pollutants, including dioxin, benzene and formaldehyde.

"Wood smoke is a major source of air pollution in the Bay Area during the winter months," said Air District Executive Officer Jack Broadbent. "Wintertime inversions can trap wood smoke pollutants at ground-level for up to weeks at a time, making air unhealthy to breathe. So far this year there has been only one *Spare the Air* day. We'd like to continue this healthy trend throughout the winter by asking residents to refrain from burning wood especially during the holidays when more people are likely to use their fireplaces," Broadbent added.

Scientific evidence links wood smoke exposure to health hazards including higher rates of childhood asthma, heart disease and even premature death. To reduce your exposure to wood smoke, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District is asking Bay Area residents to follow these clean-air guidelines:

1. Break the wood burning habit this year and don't burn wood on Spare the Air Nights.
2. NEVER burn garbage, chemically treated or painted wood, or wrapping paper which can produce noxious smoke and fumes, and release toxic compounds into the air.
3. Pay attention to local air quality reports. To get advance notification when air is expected to be unhealthy, register for AirAlerts at [sparetheair.org](http://sparetheair.org).

**For a free Woodburning Handbook and more information on wood smoke pollution, visit [www.sparetheair.org](http://www.sparetheair.org) or call 1-800 HELP AIR. Please continue to Spare the Air this winter.**

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