



Advisory

For Immediate Release
December 17, 2006

Contact: Darrell E. Waller
650-455-3169 (cell)

Spare the Air TONIGHT Advisory! Air Quality is forecast to be Unhealthy

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) is issuing a ***Spare the Air Tonight* Advisory for this evening, Sunday, December 17, through tomorrow morning.** Forecasts predict that particulate pollution concentrations will reach unhealthy levels. The Air District is asking Bay Area residents **to not burn wood and to limit their driving** tonight and tomorrow morning, in order to help reduce particulate emissions. This is the **seventh** *Spare the Air Tonight* advisory of the season so far.

There is no free transit during the Spare the Air Tonight season.

Still, cool weather conditions continue to favor the buildup of particulate matter. In the wintertime, particulate pollution is most highly concentrated at night and in the early morning hours. On winter evenings, the earth cools the air close to the ground, which creates an inversion layer of warmer air above. When there is no wind, pollution trapped under this lid of warm air can build up rapidly to unhealthy levels. During the winter the angle of the sun is so shallow that the earth does not radiate enough heat in the early morning hours to lift the inversion layer, so particulate pollution persists until mid-morning.

The tiny particles in wood smoke and vehicle exhaust can cause serious health problems. Due to their small size they can be inhaled deep into the lungs. These microscopic particles are only 2.5 microns in size or smaller, roughly 25 times smaller than the diameter of a human hair. Small particle pollution represents a health hazard for the general public, and is especially dangerous for the very young, the elderly, and for people with respiratory or cardiovascular disease.

For more information call 1-800 HELP AIR
or visit our website: www.sparetheair.org

###