



NEWS

For Immediate Release

April 10, 2008

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Air District Hosts Informational Meetings to Discuss Draft Wood Smoke Regulation

San Francisco, CA - The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is holding a series of informational public meetings to inform residents about the proposed regulation to reduce wood burning on Spare the Air nights during the winter months.

"There is increasing scientific evidence that particulate matter poses a significant health threat to the public," said Jack P. Broadbent, Air District Executive Officer. "This proposed rule is intended to protect public health by restricting wood burning on nights when air quality is forecast to be unhealthy."

The Air District is seeking to reduce emissions of harmful particulate matter from wood-burning devices, including indoor and outdoor fireplaces and wood-burning stoves. Wood smoke contains a complex mixture of gases and particles that remain in the air during cold stagnant nights.

The draft regulation would:

- Limit wood burning when air quality is unhealthy and a Spare the Air advisory is issued.
- Place limits on excessive smoke (exceeding 20%) opacity
- Require EPA certified stoves and inserts to be sold or transferred
- Require EPA certified stoves and inserts in new construction
- Prohibit burning garbage and other harmful materials
- Require labeling and disclosure on wood sold within the Bay Area

The smaller-sized particles, 2.5 microns or smaller, are of the greatest health concern. When inhaled, they can lodge deeply in the lungs and affect the cardio-respiratory system. Studies have linked high particulate levels to health effects such as nose and throat irritation, aggravated asthma, bronchitis, and lung damage.

Public participation is important to the rule making process. At the workshops, staff will explain the draft regulation and respond to questions from the public. A final proposal incorporating consideration of public comments will be presented to the Air District Board of Directors later in the year.

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WHY IS A REGULATION NEEDED NOW?

Concerns over the adverse health effects to the public from fine particulate pollution (PM 2.5) have led the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to strengthen air quality standards for fine particulates. Residential wood burning represents the largest source of PM2.5 during winter months, contributing approximately 33% on cold winter days. The Air District is required to establish regulations to meet the Environmental Protection Agency standards in order to protect public health. Similar rules have been successfully implemented in other areas throughout California and the nation resulting in significant improvements to air quality.

For a copy of the detailed workshop report go to www.baaqmd.gov and look under Rules and Regulations, Workshop.

Note: Two workshops will also be available via webcast at www.baaqmd.gov/woodsmoke.htm beginning on the day of the meeting.

<p>Monday, April 14, 2008 1-3 pm Redwood City Community Activities Bldg 1400 Roosevelt Avenue Redwood City, CA 94061</p>	<p>Tuesday, April 15, 2008 6 - 8 pm Napa County Library 500 Coombs Street Napa, CA 94559</p>	<p>Thursday, April 17, 2008 1-3 pm Steele Lane Community Center Dohn Room, 415 Steele Lane Santa Rosa, CA 95403 This meeting will be webcast</p>
<p>Monday, April 21, 2008 1-3 pm JFK Library, Joseph Room 505 Santa Clara Street Vallejo, CA 94590</p>	<p>Wednesday, April 23, 2008 1 - 3 pm Concord Senior Center 2727 Parkside Circle Concord, CA 94520</p>	<p>Thursday, April 24, 2008 1-3 pm Robert Livermore Community Center Room 4444 East Avenue Livermore, CA 94550</p>
<p>Monday, April 28, 2008 1-3 pm Hill Community Room 1560 Hill Road Novato, CA 94947</p>	<p>Tuesday, April 29, 2008 6 - 8 pm San Jose Community Room 200 East Santa Clara Street San Jose, CA 95113</p>	<p>Wednesday, April 30, 2008 1 - 3 pm Metropolitan Transportation Commission Metrocenter Auditorium, 101 Eighth Street Oakland, CA 94607 This meeting will be webcast</p>

TRANSLATION SERVICES

Translation services will be provided at San Jose, Vallejo and Oakland locations. To request translation services at additional meetings please contact Ruth Argueta, *in advance*, at rargueta@baaqmd.gov or (415) 749-4778, so your request can be accommodated.