



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Air District asks public to voluntarily refrain from burning wood Friday, January 13 *Wood burning is allowed, but strongly discouraged*

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is calling a recommended no burn day asking the public to voluntarily refrain from burning Friday, January 13, 2012, to prevent air quality from becoming unhealthy this weekend.

A *Winter Spare the Air Alert* is NOT in effect on Friday and wood burning is allowed, but strongly discouraged.

"Although air quality is not expected to reach unhealthy levels on Friday, we are anticipating levels to rise on Saturday," said Eric Stevenson, director of technical services of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. "We are asking the public to refrain from wood burning Friday to avoid unhealthy air quality this weekend."

The weather forecast for the next couple of days indicates that the Bay Area may experience stagnant weather patterns that trap wood smoke near the ground, causing unhealthy breathing conditions for all Bay Area residents. If pollution levels continue to climb, the Air District will call a *Winter Spare the Air Alert* and the use of wood burning devices will be banned.

Wood smoke is the largest source of wintertime air pollution in the Bay Area. It contains harmful pollutants such as soot and carbon monoxide, as well as toxins such as dioxin. In the winter, wood smoke from the 1.4 million fireplaces and woodstoves in the Bay Area contributes about one-third of the harmful airborne soot pollution. Wood smoke can cause breathing difficulties for many individuals, especially children, seniors and those with heart or lung conditions

The public must check before they burn during the Winter Spare the Air season which runs from November 1 through February 29. The daily burn status can be found:

- On the Air District Web sites: www.baaqmd.gov or www.sparetheair.org
- Via the toll-free hotline 1-877-4-NO-BURN (complaints can also be filed via the hotline)
- By signing up for AirAlerts at www.sparetheair.org or phone alerts at 1-800-430-1515

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. For more information about Spare the Air, visit www.sparetheair.org.

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