



# NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## ***Winter Spare the Air Alert called for Saturday, February 2***

*Use of wood-burning devices is prohibited*

**SAN FRANCISCO** – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is issuing the season’s tenth *Winter Spare the Air Alert* for Saturday, February 2, which bans burning wood, manufactured fire logs or any other solid fuel, both indoors and outdoors for 24 hours.

This *Winter Spare the Air Alert* has been called due to a regional high pressure system across the Bay Area this weekend. Still weather conditions have allowed air pollution levels to rise and are expected to reach unhealthy levels on Saturday in the region.

“Wood smoke is the ‘other second-hand smoke,’ with many of the same harmful qualities as cigarette smoke,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “In the Bay Area, it’s the single largest source of air pollution on still winter days.”

It is illegal for Bay Area residents and businesses to use their fireplaces, woodstoves, pellet stoves, outdoor fire pits, or any other wood-burning devices during a *Winter Spare the Air Alert*. Homes without permanently installed heating, where woodstoves or fireplaces are the only source of heat, are exempt.

Starting this winter, first-time violators will be given the option to take a wood smoke awareness class, online or by mail, to learn about the hazards of wood smoke pollution in lieu of paying a penalty. Second violations will result in a \$500 ticket and subsequent ticket amounts will be higher.

The public must check before they burn during the Winter Spare the Air season, which runs from November 1 through February 28. The daily burn status can be found:

- On the Air District Web sites: [www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov) or [www.sparetheair.org](http://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](http://www.sparetheair.org) or phone alerts at 1-800-430-1515
- Via the Spare the Air iPhone and Android Apps

In the winter, wood smoke from the 1.4 million fireplaces and wood stoves in the Bay Area is the single largest source of air pollution, contributing about one-third of the harmful fine particulate pollution in the air. Exposure to wood smoke—like cigarette smoke—has been linked to serious respiratory illnesses and even increased risk of heart attacks. Breathing fine particles accounts for more than 90 percent of premature deaths related to air pollution.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District ([www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov)) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area.

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