



NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Air District asks public to voluntarily not burn wood today *Wood burning strongly discouraged but not illegal*

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is recommending Bay Area residents not burn wood in their fireplaces or woodstoves today, November 6.

Offshore winds last night contributed to increased particulate pollution levels in the northeastern portion of the Bay Area today. If these conditions continue, it may lead to an exceedance of the federal health standard. In order to prevent air quality from deteriorating even more, the Air District is asking residents not to burn wood.

A Winter Spare the Air Alert is NOT in effect today and wood burning is not illegal, but strongly discouraged.

"Air quality is worse than expected today, and in order to prevent air pollution levels from continuing to rise, we are asking Bay Area residents to voluntarily refrain from wood burning," said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Bay Area Air District. "We appreciate your support in helping to protect our families and neighbors from the hazards of particulate pollution."

Like cigarette smoke, wood smoke contains fine particles and carcinogenic substances that make the air harmful to breathe. Wood smoke is the major source of air pollution in the Bay Area in the wintertime and is especially harmful to children, the elderly and people with respiratory conditions.

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 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
- 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 particulate accounts for more than 90 percent of premature deaths related to air pollution.

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.

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