Bay Area Air District

Appliance Rules Concept Paper Overview

The Air District adopted zero NOx amendments to the existing Appliance Rules in 2023 to eliminate harmful nitrogen oxides (NOx) pollution from gas furnaces and water heaters. These appliances are among the largest sources of NOx from our homes, contributing to smog and fine particle pollution that can trigger asthma, heart disease, and other health problems. Transitioning to zero NOx models over time is expected to prevent dozens of premature deaths annually and save hundreds of millions of dollars in healthcare costs.

What We're Considering

To make the transition fair and practical, the Air District is working on 2026 flexibility amendments that could:

- Allow continued sales of small (≤35-gallon) gas water heaters for a limited time.
- Provide exemptions for low-income homeowners and some small business types.
- Permit contractors to purchase and install temporary "loaner" water heaters for emergencies
- Grant extra time or exemptions for homes needing major electrical upgrades, water heater relocation, or hydronic systems

What It Means for You

The Air District is working to make this transition affordable and achievable.

- You can keep using your current gas water heaters and furnaces until they need replacement.
- When the time comes to replace them, zero-emission models will be cleaner, more efficient, and increasingly affordable over time.
- The potential updates ensure flexibility for homes with unique challenges, so no one is left behind as we move toward cleaner air.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP: EARLY 2026 — WE WANT YOUR INPUT!

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