



## **NEWS RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:** Kristine Roselius, 415.749.4900

### **Winter Spare the Air season comes to an end**

**SAN FRANCISCO** - The Bay Area Air Quality Management District's 2018-19 Winter Spare the Air season ended February 28, with 16 Winter Spare the Air Alerts called from November through February.

The 2018-19 Winter Spare the Air season included nearly two weeks of alerts due to smoke from the Camp Fire that caused some of the unhealthiest air quality ever recorded in the Bay Area. The other two alerts were due to normal winter weather conditions that trap wood smoke near the ground.

"Smoke from the Camp Fire had significant air quality and health impacts for Bay Area residents in November," said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. "As a result, the public is very aware of air quality issues and now is the time to take the necessary steps, like switching to cleaner heating options, to protect our air and our health."

First-time violators of the Wood Burning Rule are encouraged to take a wood smoke awareness course to learn more about the health impacts of wood smoke and the winter weather conditions that lead to unhealthy air quality. Those violators who choose not to take the course will receive a \$100 ticket. Second violations are subject to a \$500 ticket, with the amount increasing for any subsequent violations.

This season, the Air District received a total of 1,319 wood smoke complaints from Bay Area residents. To date, 45 violations were issued to residents observed to be in violation of the Wood Burning Rule.

#### **Complaints by County**

Alameda – 155

Contra Costa – 304

Marin – 164

Napa – 56

San Francisco – 58

San Mateo – 179

Santa Clara – 185

Solano – 27

Sonoma – 178

No county details provided – 13

**TOTAL – 1,319**

Wood smoke from the 1.4 million fireplaces and wood stoves in the region is the largest source of wintertime air pollution in the Bay Area, containing harmful pollutants such as particulate matter and carbon monoxide. Exposure to wood smoke has been linked to serious respiratory illnesses and increased risk of heart attacks.

The Wood Burning Rule still requires, on a year-round basis, that residents who use their fireplace or outdoor fire pit burn cleanly using dry, seasoned firewood and that they not burn garbage, leaves or other material that would cause excessive smoke. Residents who exceed the visible smoke provision of the rule could still be subject to a ticket, even outside the November–February Winter Spare the Air season.

The [Bay Area Air Quality Management District](#) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [YouTube](#). For more information about Spare the Air, visit [www.sparetheair.org](http://www.sparetheair.org).

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*Air District Communications Office*  
375 Beale Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94105  
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