



BAY AREA AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 25, 2020
CONTACT: Walter Wallace, 415.519.4628

Air District asks public not to burn wood over Thanksgiving holiday ***Wood burning strongly discouraged but not illegal***

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is asking residents to not burn wood in their fireplaces or woodstoves tonight and on Thanksgiving Day to help prevent air pollution from rising to unhealthy levels.

While air quality is expected to be good to moderate throughout the Bay Area, wood burning during the Thanksgiving holiday can significantly impact localized areas and neighborhoods. Wood burning can also significantly impact indoor air quality.

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

"We are asking the public to help keep air pollution low this Thanksgiving by doing one significant thing – not burning wood indoors or outdoors," said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. "During this holiday season, our respiratory health is a top priority. With the help of Bay Area residents, we can all have clean and healthy air to breathe over the holiday."

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. [According to information posted on CDC's website](#), exposure to wood smoke may make you more susceptible to respiratory infections, likely including COVID-19.

Bay Area residents can find out if a Spare the Air Alert is in effect by:

- Via text alerts! To sign up, text the word "START" to the number 817-57
- On the Air District Web sites: www.baagmd.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. One fireplace burning can pollute an entire neighborhood. 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](#) 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.

#

*Air District Communications Office
375 Beale Street, Suite 600, San Francisco, CA 94105
[Air District Homepage](#) | [News Releases](#)*