



NEWS RELEASE

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Air District asks public to not burn wood to keep pollution levels low during shelter-in-place order

Wood burning discouraged but not illegal

SAN FRANCISCO – During this challenging time, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District is asking the public to not burn wood in their fireplaces, outdoor fire pits or woodstoves during the shelter-in-place order for COVID-19 to protect the respiratory health of all Bay Area residents.

While air quality is expected to be good throughout the Bay Area, wood burning can impact localized areas and significantly impact indoor air quality.

“As we all struggle during this difficult time to stay healthy and protect our health and the health of our families, it may be comforting for some to light a fire in the fireplace but that fire can have real health consequences,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “The fine particulates in smoke can stress our respiratory and immune systems at a time when we all are especially apprehensive about staying healthy. Please be conscientious of your neighbors, especially the most vulnerable – preserving good air quality will help everyone during this difficult time.”

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

“Help us all to maintain healthy lungs and a strong immune system during the COVID-19 crisis by not burning wood,” said Judith Cutino, health officer of the Air District. “Now is the time to be highly considerate of those with asthma or respiratory illnesses. Smoke impairs our lung function as well as our immunity at a time when we can least afford it.”

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

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality and the global climate in the nine-county Bay Area. Connect with the Air District via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

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