

NEWS RELEASE

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Air District asks public to not burn wood over the Christmas holiday *Wood burning strongly discouraged – burning wrapping paper is prohibited*

SAN FRANCISCO – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is asking Bay Area residents to not burn wood in their fireplaces or woodstoves over the Christmas holiday to keep air quality from becoming unhealthy.

While air quality is expected to be good throughout the Bay Area, wood burning during the Christmas 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. However, wood burning is strongly discouraged at this time.**

“While we are excited to gather with our loved ones this year, foregoing a fire in the fireplace will protect air quality for our families, friends and neighbors,” said Jack Broadbent, executive officer of the Air District. “Increased wood burning around the holidays can lead to high levels of air pollution that can cause serious health effects to Bay Area residents. With your help, we can keep our air clean and enjoy a healthier holiday season.”

Decorative wrapping paper is manufactured using synthetic inks, plastic film, metallic finishes and other chemicals which release toxic and carcinogenic compounds into the air when burned. The smoke is released into your home and neighborhood where family and friends will breathe it in. **It is always illegal to burn wrapping paper, trash and scrap wood.**

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 in the wintertime and is especially harmful to children, the elderly and people with respiratory conditions.

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

- Signing up for text alerts. To sign up, text the word “START” to the number 817-57
- Calling 1-877-4NO-BURN
- Visiting www.sparetheair.org or www.baaqmd.gov
- Signing up for automatic e-mail AirAlerts at www.sparetheair.org
- Signing up for automatic phone alerts at www.sparetheair.org
- Downloading the Spare the Air iPhone or Android app

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](#). For more information about Spare the Air, visit www.sparetheair.org.

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