



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Air District asks public to not burn wood over Thanksgiving holiday** *Wood burning has negative health impacts and is strongly discouraged*

**SAN FRANCISCO** –The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is asking residents to not burn wood over the Thanksgiving holiday to help reduce air pollution and protect public health. As we enter the holiday season, gathering around a fireplace may be a tradition for many, but there are serious health impacts associated with wood burning.

Like wildfire or 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. Exposure to wood smoke is unhealthy, even for short periods of time.

In the winter, wood smoke from the 1.2 million fireplaces and wood stoves in the Bay Area is the single largest source of wintertime air pollution, contributing about one-third of the harmful fine particulate emissions. 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.

Due to these health impacts, we strongly discourage wood burning at all times of the year, but it is particularly important to refrain from burning during the holidays when it is more common across the region. Wood burning can cause air quality to become unhealthy, especially in our communities and in inland valleys.

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

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

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