



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 15, 2023

CONTACT: Air District Communications Office – communications@baaqmd.gov

Air District strengthens building appliance rules to reduce harmful NOx emissions, protect air quality & public health

New rule amendments will phase out NOx emitting natural gas furnaces and water heaters

SAN FRANCISCO – Today, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District Board of Directors adopted amendments to Regulation 9, Rules 4 and 6 to eliminate emissions of nitrogen oxides, or NOx, from residential and commercial natural gas furnaces and water heaters in the Bay Area by requiring new appliances to be zero-NOx.

Emissions from natural gas building appliances account for a similar amount of NOx pollution as passenger vehicles in the Bay Area. As a group, they are one of the largest emitters of nitrogen oxides of all stationary sources of air pollution, which the Air District regulates.

“The 1.8 million water heaters and furnaces in the Bay Area significantly impact our air quality, resulting in dozens of early deaths and a wide range of health impacts, particularly in communities of color,” said Dr. Philip Fine, executive officer of the Air District. “This groundbreaking regulation will phase out the most polluting appliances in homes and businesses to protect Bay Area residents from the harmful air pollution they cause.”

The rule amendments would apply only to new appliances and do not mandate the immediate change out of existing appliances, nor will they apply to appliances used for cooking, such as gas stoves. NOx-emitting natural gas furnaces and water heaters will be phased out over time, beginning with water heaters in 2027.

The rule amendments will improve overall regional air quality from the outdoor venting of these appliances, lower exposure to particulate matter, particularly in communities of color, and avoid up to \$890 million per year in health impacts due to air pollution exposure.

NOx emissions impact local and regional air quality and contribute to the formation of ozone and particulate matter, or PM2.5. Exposure to NOx has been linked to coughing, wheezing, difficulty breathing, asthma and increased susceptibility to respiratory infections. Exposure to particulate matter has been linked to asthma and other respiratory conditions, neurological disease, heart attack, stroke, lung cancer and premature death. The new amendments will safeguard public health against the hazards of these pollutants and prevent an estimated 85 premature deaths, as well as dozens of new asthma cases, in the Bay Area each year.

The Air District released a draft environmental impact report and solicited comments to the proposed rule amendments through a 45-day public comment period, which ended on February 6, 2023.

Compliance dates are between 2027 and 2031, dependent on equipment type, use and size. To learn more about the building appliance rules and compliance timelines, visit www.baaqmd.gov/building-appliances.

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](#).

#

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