

# What is the Wood Burning Rule?

The Air District amended the Wood Burning Rule in 2025, to further protect Bay Area residents from the harmful health impacts of wood smoke. The rule makes it illegal to burn wood, manufactured fire logs, pellets or any other solid fuel indoors and outdoors when a Spare the Air Alert—Burn Ban is in effect.

The amendments to the rule allow the Air District to ban wood burning anytime of the year when particulate pollution becomes unhealthy rather than only during winter months.

## **The Air District has strengthened the regulations by significantly tightening exemptions including:**

- Sole Source of Heat Exemption – Households may qualify for a sole source of heat exemption if their wood-burning device is EPA-certified and registered with the Air District.
- Broken Heater Exemption – Households may receive a temporary 30-day exemption to repair a non-functional heater.
- Wood-burning devices may not be installed in new building construction – only gas-fueled or electric heaters are allowed.
- Landlords in areas with natural gas service are required to provide a form of heat, other than a wood-burning device, to their tenants and no longer qualify for a sole source of heat exemption.
- Under Rule 6-3, wood burning is prohibited when the Air District forecasts that 24-hour average PM2.5 concentrations will exceed 25 micrograms per cubic meter ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ), triggering Mandatory Burn Bans.



# What is the Wood Burning Rule?

## Sources of Wood Burning and Air Pollution

- Air pollution affects millions of Californians every day. It damages our health, crops, property and the environment. In neighborhoods everywhere across California, residential wood burning is a growing source of air pollution. Most wood heaters, such as woodstoves and fireplaces, release far more air pollution, indoors and out, than heaters using other fuels. In winter, when we heat our homes most often, cold nights with light winds cause smoke and air pollutants to remain stagnant at ground level for long periods.

## Burning Wood Causes Indoor Air Pollution

- High levels of smoke pollution from stoves and fireplaces have been measured in some wood-burning homes. If you or family members suffer from chronic or repeated respiratory problems like asthma or emphysema, or have heart disease, the Air District recommends not burning wood.
- More information on Wood Burning can be found on the Air District's website: [www.baaqmd.gov/en/rules-and-compliance/wood-smoke](http://www.baaqmd.gov/en/rules-and-compliance/wood-smoke)

