

What is the **Wood Burning Rule?**

The Air District adopted its Wood Burning Rule in 2008 to protect Bay Area residents from smoke pollution from wood burning. When a Spare the Air Alert is in effect for particulate pollution, wood burning is not allowed. This regulation was adopted to protect public health, and originally only applied to the winter months between November and February.

In 2019, the rule was amended to extend the wood burning ban to include any days year-round when a Spare the Air Alert is in effect due to high levels of fine particulate pollution, such as during a wildfire.

In 2015, we strengthened the regulation by significantly tightening exemptions:

- Sole Source of Heat Exemption (11.01.16) – 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 (11.01.15) – Households may receive a temporary 30-day exemption to repair a non-functional heater.
- Starting 11.01.16, wood-burning devices may not be installed in new building construction – only gas-fueled or electric heaters.
- 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.



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Sources of Wood Burning and Air Pollution

- Air pollution affects millions of Californians every day. It damages our health, our crops, our property and our 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 the most, cold nights with little wind cause smoke and air pollutants to remain stagnate 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 at all.

More information on Wood Burning can be found on the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's website: <https://www.baaqmd.gov/en/rules-and-compliance/wood-smoke>

