

A Northwest Tradition

Heating with wood is a treasured American tradition. A crackling fire evokes fond memories for many of us, but wood smoke can threaten the health of our families and our communities.

Wood smoke is a complex mixture of fine particles, many of which are toxic and known to cause cancer. Breathing wood smoke can cause serious health problems, especially for children whose developing lungs are small and vulnerable, and for people with asthma, heart disease or other respiratory illnesses.

During the colder months, especially at night and on weekends, wood smoke can account for up to 80% of the air pollution in residential areas.

If you heat with wood, please do your part and help everyone breathe a little easier this winter. Please burn responsibly.



For over 40 years, it has been the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency's responsibility and our privilege to ensure clean, healthy air for current and future generations. The Agency provides the following programs and services:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------|
| Air Monitoring and Reporting | Outdoor Burning |
| Asbestos | Public Information |
| Compliance Assistance | Permitting |
| Complaint Response & Enforcement | Wood Burning |

For more information about these or other services, please visit us on the web at www.spokanecleanair.org

Phone: (509) 477-4727
 Burn Info Line: (509) 477-4710
 Air Quality Data (509) 477-2571



Wood Heat

A guide to better burning for cleaner air

Stay Warm, Burn Smart

Five easy steps for cleaner burning

1. Burn only dry, clean, untreated wood or manufactured logs/pellets - It is illegal to burn anything else. Paper is legal only for starting a fire. Firewood should be split, stacked and covered for at least 6 to

12 months before burning. The wood moisture content should be less than 20%. Moisture meters can be purchased at local stove shops.



2. Give your fire plenty of air - Be sure not to overload the stove or damper it down. Small hot fires burn cleaner, produce more heat, and can use less wood. Restricting air to your stove can lead to excessive smoke, which can result in a fine.

3. Look at your chimney - If you can see smoke, your fire probably needs more air. Smokey fires can lead to creosote build-up, which can result in dangerous chimney fires. An efficient, legal fire emits only heat waves and, at the most, just a wisp of smoke.

4. Check current burning conditions - If weather conditions are stagnant and wood smoke is increasing, a temporary restriction on burning may be issued. Before you light, call the Burn Info Line, 477-4710 or visit www.spokanecleanair.org. You can sign up at the website for email notifications of burning restrictions.

5. Consider an upgrade - New technology stoves and inserts are significantly cleaner and more energy efficient, burning much less wood for the same amount of heat. Gas stoves and inserts are other options to consider.

Washington's

Wood Smoke Laws

The Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency enforces the following wood smoke laws, which are designed to protect public health in our communities:

Chimney smoke - State law limits how much smoke comes from your chimney. *See next panel.*

Burn restrictions - Burn restrictions are called when fine smoke particles become concentrated and are not readily dispersing due to stagnant air. The type of burn restriction depends on the level of air pollution.



■ **Stage 1 Burn Restriction (yellow)** - Burning is not allowed* unless it's in an EPA certified device. A label should be on your device indicating certification. Give us a call or check our website for more information about certification.

■ **Stage 2 Burn Restriction (red)** - Burning is not allowed in any wood stove, fireplace or pellet stove.*

Purchasing and installing a wood burning device - Any wood burning device offered for sale, sold, or given away to Washington residents must meet Washington's emissions limits: 4.5 grams/hour for non-catalytic devices and 2.5 grams/hour for catalytic devices.

Before selling, purchasing or installing a wood burning device, check with Spokane Clean Air. A permit and inspection is required to install a wood burning device. Call your city or county building department for more information.

* Households with no other source of adequate heat can request an exemption from Spokane Clean Air to burn during a burn restriction. However, the chimney smoke limit must still be met.

Chimney Smoke Limits

Smoke density is referred to as opacity. State and local regulations limit the density of chimney smoke to 20% opacity. No visible smoke is 0% opacity, and smoke so thick you can't see through it is 100% opacity. At 20% opacity, smoke is barely visible. If Spokane Clean Air observes excessive smoke from your chimney, you may be fined over \$200.



20% Opacity - legal maximum



40% Opacity - illegal