

Rule 421: Mandatory No-Burn Restrictions in Sacramento County



■ The AQMD

The Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District is the local government agency responsible for regulating stationary, non-vehicular sources of air pollution in Sacramento County. Its jurisdiction includes all unincorporated areas of Sacramento County, as well as the cities of Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Folsom, Galt, Isleton, Rancho Cordova and Sacramento. The AQMD's overall mission is to achieve clean air goals by leading the region in protecting public health and the environment.

■ The Issue

Residential wood burning is the largest single source (45%) of Sacramento County's fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) wintertime air quality problems. PM 2.5 is a mixture of very small liquid droplets and solid particles that are in the air we breathe. Particulate matter may contain soot, smoke, metals, nitrates, sulfates and dust. Scientific studies have linked long-term particle pollution, especially fine particles, with significant health problems, including aggravated asthma, chronic bronchitis, irregular heartbeat, nonfatal heart attacks, and premature death in people with heart or lung disease.



The AQMD is required to establish measures to reduce particulate matter to protect public health. Rule 421: Mandatory No-Burn Restrictions is necessary for Sacramento County to meet the federal government's health standard for PM 2.5. If it does not, other restrictions on business and industry will have to be implemented.

Similar rules have been successfully implemented in other areas throughout California, and have helped provide significant improvements to air quality.

■ The Details

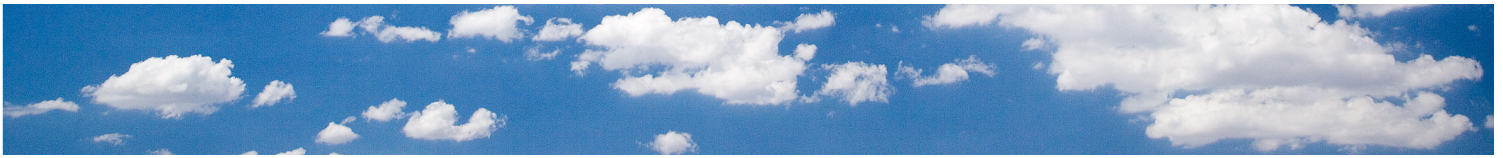
The purpose of Rule 421: Mandatory No-Burn Restrictions is to limit PM 2.5 emissions that come from the operation of wood burning devices. The proposed restriction will apply to anyone using a wood burning device in Sacramento County, but will not apply to devices that are fired by gaseous fuel (such as propane), cookstoves or wood burning devices that are used as the sole source of heat in a residence.

Rule 421, if adopted, will go into effect November 1, 2007 and stay in effect through the end of February each year. No person may operate a wood burning device when a Mandatory "No-Burn" notice is issued. The AQMD's air pollution control officer will issue a "No-Burn" notice whenever it is predicted that the 24-hour average PM 2.5 concentration will exceed $35 \mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ (or 35 micrograms of particulate matter per cubic meter of space). Currently, this translates to an 89 on the Air Quality Index (AQI), which is in the Moderate category. These small particles pose the greatest problems because they can get deep into the lungs and bloodstream, possibly affecting both the lungs and heart.

For more information call
916-874-4800 or toll free
800-880-9025, or visit
www.AirQuality.org.

SACRAMENTO METROPOLITAN





continued

■ **How You'll Know Not To Burn**

The AQMD will inform residents and businesses when it is a "Check Before You Burn" day by using a recorded telephone message for residents to call, messages posted on www.AirQuality.org and www.SpareTheAir.com, e-mail, and notifications to radio and TV stations and newspapers in Sacramento County.

■ **Penalties for Non-Compliance**

There will be penalties for not complying with the new restriction. Fines of \$50 would be issued for first time violators, increasing for further violations. First time offenders would be allowed to attend an instructional class in lieu of the fine. Compliance will be enforced with visual inspections of chimneys to determine if a wood burning device is in use.

■ **Protect Your Health**

Scientific studies have linked long-term particle pollution, especially fine particles, with significant health problems including:

- Increased respiratory symptoms, such as irritation of the airways, coughing or difficulty breathing
- Decreased lung function
- Aggravated asthma
- Development of chronic respiratory disease in children
- Development of chronic bronchitis or chronic obstructive lung disease
- Irregular heartbeat
- Nonfatal heart attacks
- Premature death in people with heart or lung disease, including death from lung cancer

■ **How Can You Help?**

There are several things you can do to reduce wood smoke pollution and its health effects through proper fuel selection and use:

- Purchase a cleaner burning, low-emission hearth product
- Season wood outdoors through the hot, dry summer for at least six months before burning it — properly seasoned wood is darker, has cracks in the end grain, and sounds hollow when smacked against another piece of wood
- Store wood outdoors, stacked neatly off the ground with the top covered to keep it from getting wet
- Burn only dry, well-seasoned wood which has been split
- Start fires with dry kindling, not paper or cardboard
- Burn hot, bright fires
- Let the fire burn down to coals, then rake the coals toward the air inlet
- Reload your wood stove by adding at least three pieces of wood each time, on and behind the mound of hot coals — avoid adding one log at a time
- Regularly remove ashes from the wood stove into a metal container with a cover and store outdoors
- Burning of garbage is prohibited

For more information about the proposed Rule 421: Mandatory No-Burn Restrictions or the health effects of wood smoke, please call **916-874-4800**, toll free **800-880-9025** or go to www.AirQuality.org.