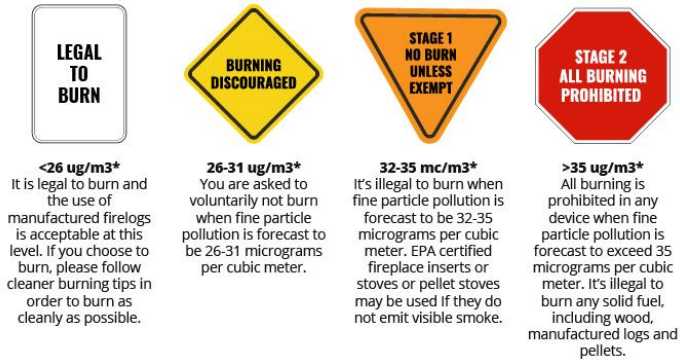
Newsletter Articles

Article 1 – Check Before You Burn: It's the Law!

Starting Nov. 1, the Check Before You Burn law takes effect in Sacramento County! This means from now through the end of February, the use of all fireplaces, wood stoves, inserts, and pellet stoves is prohibited when fine particle pollution (PM2.5) is forecast to be high.

Fine particulate matter, or PM2.5, is the main source of winter air pollution in Sacramento County. It is released by burning wood, or other solid fuels in fireplaces, fire pits, chimineas, and other wood-burning appliances. Breathing PM2.5 can have serious, long-lasting health impacts for everyone in our community such as respiratory disease, increased asthma symptoms, or irregular heartbeat.



Check the burn status daily to know if it's legal to burn! On a No Burn Day, wood burning is strictly prohibited. The law applies to residents and businesses in Sacramento County, including the cities of Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Folsom, Galt, Isleton, Rancho Cordova, and Sacramento. Reduce air pollution from fine particulate matter and check the burn status each day!

Three simple ways to Check Before You Burn:

1. Visit www.AirQuality.org/CBYB for the daily burn status.
2. Follow @AQMD on X or @Sac Metro Air District on Facebook.
3. Call the burn status hotline at 1-877-NO-BURN-5 (1-877-662-8765).

Clean air is a team effort! If you see someone burning on a No Burn Day file a complaint. File online or call (279) 207-1122 or (800) 880-9025. The Air District investigates complaints related to smoke, dust, odors, outdoor burning, and other air quality concerns.
Thank you for your ongoing partnership and commitment to sharing this information to help improve air quality across Sacramento County.

Check Before You Burn is implemented by the Sac Metro Air District in Sacramento County. The law provides the public with the same-day and next-day burn status.

Article 2 – Air Pollution Doesn't Take a Holiday

As it gets colder throughout the region, it's a perfect time to cozy up with fuzzy socks, a soft sweater, your favorite blanket, and a hot drink! Just remember, if you're thinking about lighting a fire between November and February, be sure to Check Before You Burn first in Sacramento County.

Burning wood releases unhealthy fine particulate matter (PM2.5) that harms our lungs and negatively impacts local air quality. During winter, calm, cold weather acts like a lid, trapping wood smoke closer to the ground where we breathe, which can lead to serious health problems, including:

- Decreased lung function
- Aggravated asthma
- Chronic respiratory diseases in children
- Irregular heartbeat
- Heart attacks
- Increased heart risks for post-menopausal women

The Sac Metro Air District investigates air quality complaints and issues wood-burning violations. If you see or smell smoke when wood burning is prohibited, you should file a complaint. Complaints can be filed online at AirQuality.org/CBYB or by calling (279) 207-1122 or 1-800-880-9025!

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Article 3 – Five Reasons Not to Burn Wood

From November through February, the Sac Metro Air District enforces the Check Before You Burn law, which restricts wood burning during periods of high fine particle pollution (PM2.5). This regulation applies to residents and businesses in Sacramento County, including the cities of Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Folsom, Galt, Isleton, Rancho Cordova, and Sacramento. This program helps reduce smoke from wood-burning devices.

Here are five reasons not to burn wood:

1) Wood smoke contains toxins that can linger in your lungs for months, increasing the risk of respiratory diseases and permanent damage to your health.
2) Small particles from wood smoke can enter your bloodstream and trigger an asthma attack, with long-term impacts on your heart and lung health.
3) Wood smoke poses a significant health risk, especially for older adults and the elderly.
4) Children are particularly vulnerable, as their lungs are still developing.
5) Smoke from chimneys can infiltrate your home or your neighbor's home, even when doors and windows are closed.

Together, we can work to reduce air pollution and negative health impacts from wood-burning devices. Do your part and help your community stay healthy for generations to come!

To check the daily burn status and get more information about the Check Before You Burn law, visit www.AirQuality.org/CBYB and follow @AQMD on X or @SacMetroAirDistrict on Facebook.

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Article 4 – Tips for a Warmer Winter

Winter is officially here, and it's chilly outside! While we all want our homes to feel cozy, before you decide to light a wood-burning fire, consider its negative health impacts. Did you know that wood smoke contains tiny harmful particles known as fine particulate matter (PM2.5)? These tiny particles are up to 30 times smaller than a grain of sand! This smoke can trigger asthma attacks and lead to other heart and lung issues. Here are some tips for staying warm without compromising air quality or your health.

1) Bundle Up: Your body temperature can drop much more quickly than the room temperature. Instead of starting a fire, add an extra layer of clothing – like a sweatshirt, scarf, or hat – to stay warm.
2) Use Pool Noodles: Yes, really! Wind drafts can account for 5% to 30% of your energy use, according to the U.S. Department of Energy. Cut a pool noodle in half lengthwise, wrap it in fabric, and place it under your door to effectively block drafts.
3) Run Your Ceiling Fan: Warm air rises, so set your ceiling fan to the lowest speed in a clockwise direction. This helps push warm air back down into the room, potentially reducing heating costs by 10%!

Remember to Check Before You Burn before lighting a fire. If you burn wood on a "No Burn" day, first-time violations can result in a $50 fine, with increased fines for any subsequent violations.

To learn more about the law, visit www.AirQuality.org/CBYB and follow @AQMD on X or @SacMetroAirDistrict on Facebook.

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