

Where there's fire, there's wood smoke

If you've ever roasted marshmallows around a campfire you're familiar with wood smoke. What you may not know is that some constituents of wood smoke are toxic or carcinogenic. Wood smoke can increase the risk of heart and lung diseases, and make you more susceptible to illness. Children, the elderly, and people with existing lung and heart disease are especially vulnerable. Even healthy individuals can experience eye, nose and throat irritation because of wood smoke.

Some of the constituents of wood smoke are toxic and can cause cancer and other health problems.

To reduce wood smoke in your neighbourhood, **consider replacing your old wood stove or fireplace with a cleaner low emissions certified wood stove or natural gas appliance.** Metro Vancouver residents may be eligible to receive a \$250 rebate for trading in their old uncertified wood burning appliance for a new low emission appliance. Search for 'wood stove exchange' at www.metrovancouver.org for details.



For additional information:

Metro Vancouver

www.metrovancouver.org (search: wood smoke)

BC Lung Association

www.bc.lung.ca/airquality/wood_burning.html

Health Canada

healthycanadians.gc.ca/healthy-living-vie-saine/environment-environnement/home-maison/wood-smoke-fumee-bois-eng.php

US EPA

www.epa.gov/burnwise/index.html

www.youtube.com/watch?v=yo1--Zrh11s

www.youtube.com/watch?v=jM2WGgRcnm0

Washington State Ecology

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/air/indoor_woodsmoke/wood_smoke_page.htm

<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/publications/91br023.pdf>



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If you burn, there are many ways to burn smart and burn clean

Burn only clean, seasoned wood

- Split, stack, cover and store firewood. Use well-seasoned (at least 6 months) firewood split to the right size - generally 7.5 to 15 cm (3 to 6") in diameter and 35 to 40 cm (14 to 16") in length.



Prevent the release of toxic chemicals, never burn these prohibited materials

- Pressure treated or painted wood
- Plastics and styrofoam
- Particleboard, MDF or plywood
- Saltwater driftwood
- Cardboard



Build small hot fires and avoid smouldering

- Burn clean. Use small pieces of wood kindling and newspaper to start your fire. Use dry wood – 20% moisture or less. Moisture meters are available at hardware stores. Burn small, hot, bright fires.
- Burn smart. Do not damper or hold your fire overnight. This creates air pollution, promotes creosote build-up in your chimney, and does little for heating.



Be a good neighbour

- Watch your chimney. Smoke means that your fire needs more air and/or drier wood. Open the stove or fireplace damper to increase air circulation and improve burning.
- Get your chimney inspected and swept annually.
- Don't burn when weather conditions are stagnant. From October through March you can find out if weather conditions are favourable for indoor residential wood burning by calling 604-436-6777.



Reduce air pollution and protect your health and the health of those around you.

Wood Smoke and Your Health

Many people enjoy the ambience created by a wood fire, although these fires can create a different kind of ambience for their neighbours – rooms and homes filled with wood smoke and health problems.

Burning wood releases harmful pollutants into the air we breathe, especially when poor burning techniques and inefficient wood-burning appliances are used.

What's In Wood Smoke?

Much like cigarette smoke, wood smoke contains hundreds of air pollutants.

Wood smoke is a mixture of small particles and chemicals. The particles in smoke are too small to be filtered by the nose and respiratory system, so they get deep into the lungs causing damage.

TINY PARTICLES IN WOOD SMOKE CAN AFFECT YOUR HEALTH



Heart Impacts

Increases the risk of heart attack, irregular heartbeat, heart failure, stroke and early death.



Lung Impacts

Triggers asthma attacks and aggravates other lung diseases and damages children's lungs.

Who is at greater risk?

- Older adults
- Children and teens
- People with heart or lung disease

