

# Check before you burn

The Air District's burn status program has three stages:

## Fireplace/ Woodstove

Air quality forecast: unhealthy. Burning wood, pellets or manufactured logs is prohibited from midnight to midnight. 1-800 SMOG INFO.  
**Burning Status**



Wood burning is prohibited. Burning any solid fuel such as wood, pellets or manufactured firelogs is prohibited when restrictions are in effect. The limitations are issued on a county-by-county basis when air quality is forecast to reach unhealthy levels (an Air Quality Index of greater than 150). The restrictions are in place for 24 hours, from midnight to midnight on the affected day. Violations can result in fines.

Wood burning is discouraged. Residents are asked to voluntarily refrain from operating wood-burning heaters and fireplaces when air quality is forecast to be unhealthy for sensitive groups (an AQI of 101 to 150). If you choose to burn, use pellet-fueled heaters, manufactured firelogs in open fireplaces, or EPA Phase II-certified devices.

## Fireplace/ Woodstove

Air quality forecast: unhealthy for sensitive groups. Choose not to light midnight to midnight. Info: 1-800 SMOG INFO or www.valleyair.org.  
**Burning Status**



No wood-burning restrictions. When air quality is forecast to be good or moderate (an AQI of 100 or less), residents are asked to take steps to burn cleaner. See the back panel of this brochure for clean-burning tips.

## Fireplace/ Woodstove

Air quality forecast: good or moderate. Learn to burn clean at 1-800 SMOG INFO or www.valleyair.org.  
**Burning Status**



### When

November 1 through February 28.

### Exemptions

While most residences and businesses, including lodges and restaurants, are subject to the prohibitions, exemptions apply to:

- ♦ Gas and propane devices or wood-burning cook stoves.
- ♦ Homes in which wood burning is the sole source of heat (no other heating device is built into the home).
- ♦ Devices used above 3,000 feet in elevation.
- ♦ Areas where natural gas service is not available.

### To comply

The burning status is posted daily on a countywide basis and is in effect from midnight to midnight. Residents can find the daily burn status by calling 1-800-SMOG-INFO, logging onto [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org) or through the local news media.

To report violations, residents can call:

- ♦ 1-800-281-7003 in San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Merced counties.
- ♦ 1-800-870-1037 in Madera, Fresno and Kings counties.
- ♦ 1-800-926-5550 in Tulare and the valley portion of Kern counties.

# Selling or transferring property

Prior to selling or transferring property, the homeowner must remove, replace or render inoperable any solid fuel-burning heaters that aren't either Phase II-certified or pellet-fueled. Solid fuel-burning devices that aren't Phase II-certified or pellet-fueled can be replaced with Phase II-certified, or pellet-, natural gas- or propane-fueled equipment. This requirement applies only to devices intended for space heating, i.e. stoves and inserts.

### When

Effective January 1, 2004.

### Exemptions

Open-hearth fireplaces without inserts are not subject to the change-out requirement. However, the new owner must comply with other wood-burning restrictions detailed in this brochure.

### To comply

The property seller must provide the buyer and the Air District with documentation of compliance with this section of the rule. Blank compliance forms are available at the District's three regional offices or [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org).

# New homes and developments

The rule limits the number of solid fuel-burning devices allowed in new homes and developments, based upon the ratio of housing units per acre. This portion of the rule is effective Jan. 1, 2004.

In new developments with a density ratio of more than two dwellings per acre, no open-hearth fireplaces are allowed. In new developments with three or more dwellings per acre, only two Phase II-certified devices are allowed per acre. In all new homes and developments, no more than one solid fuel-burning device is allowed per dwelling.

Check before you burn.

Find the fireplace and woodstove burning status daily at 1-800-SMOG-INFO, or at [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org)



**Modesto**  
(209) 557-6400

**Bakersfield**  
(661) 326-6900

**Fresno (main office)**  
(559) 230-6000

Therefore, the Valley Air District has adopted the following requirements in order to reduce unhealthy emissions:

**Curtailments — fireplace and woodstove burn status.** When air quality is forecast to be unhealthy, burning solid fuels such as wood, pellets and manufactured firelogs will be prohibited in affected counties.

**Change-out requirements.** Non-Phase II devices must be removed or retired prior to the sale or transfer of a property.

**Limits in new homes and developments.** Limits apply to the number of solid fuel-burning devices allowed in new residential developments.

**Prohibited fuels.** It is unlawful to burn garbage, treated wood, plastic materials, rubber, paints and paint solvents, coal, or any other material not intended for burning in a fireplace or wood-burning heater.

**Sale of wood-burning stoves.** It is illegal to sell, advertise, transfer, or install a solid fuel-burning stove or insert that is not Phase II-certified unless it has been rendered inoperable.

The rule doesn't apply to heating devices that burn only natural gas or propane, or to cooking devices.

#### *Rule definitions continued*

level on the metal sticker on the back or side of the device. Though many pellet-fueled stoves are exempt from the Phase II certification requirements, they also burn cleaner than non-certified wood-burning units. More information and a listing of Phase II-certified devices are available online at [www.epa.gov/Compliance/monitoring/programs/woodstoves/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/Compliance/monitoring/programs/woodstoves/index.html).

## Light-right tips for cleaner burning

When mandatory curtailments aren't in place, residents can do their part to improve air quality by burning cleaner. Consider these clean-burning tips:

- ◆ Ensure firewood is clean, seasoned and dry before burning it. Green, unseasoned wood smolders and creates additional emissions.
- ◆ Never burn trash, magazines, newspapers, plastics or other materials not designed to burn in a fireplace or stove. Doing so is illegal and hazardous.
- ◆ For an ambience fire in an open fireplace, a manufactured firelog may be a cleaner alternative to wood.
- ◆ Replace old solid fuel-burning equipment with cleaner Phase II or pellet-fueled devices. Or install natural gas or propane devices, which are not subject to Air District wood-burning rules.
- ◆ Burn denser woods such as oak. They take longer to ignite, but burn slower and more evenly.
- ◆ Keep your fireplace or wood stove properly maintained. Ensure that your chimney is cleaned and inspected periodically.



San Joaquin Valley  
Air Pollution  
Control District

## Rule 4901 Wood-burning Fireplaces and Wood-burning Heaters

### This rule affects:

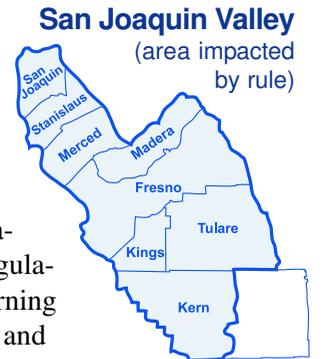
- ◆ Wood fireplaces
- ◆ Woodstoves
- ◆ Inserts
- ◆ Pellet-fueled heaters



San Joaquin Valley  
Air Pollution  
Control District

## Important information for Valley residents

This brochure provides Valley residents, businesses and government agencies with important information about new regulations on wood-burning fireplaces, inserts and pellet heaters. Everyone who owns, operates, installs, sells or otherwise handles fireplaces, woodstoves or inserts in the San Joaquin Valley should familiarize themselves with these regulations to learn how to comply and to avoid fines.



Fall and wintertime air quality in the San Joaquin Valley is among the nation's worst. During the months of November through February, airborne particles reach unhealthy concentrations too often, posing serious health risks. Smoke, soot and gases from solid fuel-burning devices contribute significantly to these pollution problems.

### **Rule definitions**

**Solid fuel:** any solid material burned in a fireplace, wood stove or insert, including wood, pellets and manufactured firelogs.

**Phase II-certified:** any wood-burning heater or insert certified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to meet Phase II emissions and performance standards. Devices manufactured on or after July 1, 1990 or sold on or after July 1, 1992 are Phase II-certified. Residents can verify a device's manufacture date and certification