



# SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** October 28, 2022

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## **Pollution Prevention Program Begins to Improve Air Quality in Winter Months**

*Check Before You Burn Program runs from Nov. 1, 2022 through Feb. 28, 2023*

**DIAMOND BAR, CA** – Tuesday, November 1<sup>st</sup> marks the start of The South Coast Air Quality Management District’s (South Coast AQMD) 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Check Before You Burn season. From November through the end of February, residents are asked to check before burning wood in their fireplaces to limit emissions of fine particulate matter (PM2.5).

“Wood-burning can emit more than five tons of PM2.5 daily,” said Wayne Nastri, South Coast AQMD’s Executive Officer. “Avoiding wood burning when a No-Burn Day is called is one of the most effective ways residents can help improve air quality, especially during the winter months.”

A No-Burn Day is a 24-hour ban on wood-burning in residential fireplaces, stoves, or outdoor fire pits in the South Coast Air Basin. South Coast AQMD forecasters call for residential No-Burn Days when PM2.5 is expected to reach elevated levels due to air emissions and stagnant weather conditions. High PM2.5 episodes are most common on calm and cool winter days, especially during holiday periods. Additional pollution from wood burning is more likely to create unhealthy air quality conditions on No-Burn Days. 35 No-Burn Days were called last winter.

Short-term exposure to PM2.5 can cause throat and eye irritation, aggravate asthma and trigger other respiratory or cardiovascular health problems. Prolonged exposure to high levels of PM2.5 may increase the risk of strokes, heart attacks and cancers. Young children, older adults and people with lung or heart diseases are especially vulnerable to the health effects of PM2.5. Burning wood contributes to poor indoor air quality, and poor air quality in the surrounding neighborhood.



South Coast AQMD has a related program to help reduce the cost to purchase and install cleaner products (stoves, inserts, gas logs and retrofit kits). Under the [Wood Stove and Fireplace Change-Out Voucher Incentive Program](#), residents in eligible zip codes can apply for a voucher that can be taken to a participating retailer that will discount the price to purchase and install a qualifying device. Households that meet low income qualifications are eligible for higher incentive amounts.

South Coast AQMD is providing several resources to the public to make following No-Burn Days as convenient as possible:

- **E-Mail Notifications:** Sign up to receive [Air Alerts](#) on air quality and be notified when a mandatory No-Burn Day has been issued for your neighborhood.
- **Check Before You Burn Map:** Visit the [Check Before You Burn map](#) on our website for daily forecast information.
- **Toll-Free Phone Number:** Call 866-966-3293 for daily Check Before You Burn information.
- **Web Resources:** Visit South Coast AQMD's Check Before You Burn Program webpage at [www.aqmd.gov/cbyb](http://www.aqmd.gov/cbyb) for more information.
- **Mobile App:** Download the [South Coast AQMD app](#) to check local air quality
- **Social Media:** Follow South Coast AQMD's social media accounts on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

South Coast AQMD's No-Burn Day alerts do not apply to mountain communities above 3,000 feet in elevation, the Coachella Valley or High Desert, homes that rely on wood as a sole source of heat, low-income households, and those without natural gas service. Gas and other non-wood burning fireplaces are also exempt.

### **About Check Before You Burn**

Check Before You Burn is South Coast AQMD's late fall and early winter program that seeks to educate residents about the hazards of wood smoke and prohibits burning of firewood in a fireplace, stove, or outdoor fire pit on No-Burn Days, when unhealthy air quality is forecast.

South Coast AQMD is the air pollution control agency for major portions of Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, and Riverside counties, including the Coachella Valley. For news, air quality alerts, event updates and more, please visit us at [www.aqmd.gov](http://www.aqmd.gov), download our award-winning app, or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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