

# News Release

For immediate release

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For: local news and assignment editors



**San Joaquin Valley**  
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT



**North District Media Contact - Modesto**

Anthony Presto (209) 557-6400

**Central District Media Contact - Fresno**

Janelle Schneider (559) 230-5853

**South District Media Contact - Bakersfield**

Brenda Turner (661) 392-5500

**Spanish language Media Contact**

Claudia Encinas (559) 230-5851

## First fireplace-use ban issued for Merced, Madera counties

*Wood burning also prohibited in Stanislaus, Fresno, Tulare and Valley portion of Kern counties*

The season's first fireplace and wood stove prohibition has been issued in **Merced and Madera counties** for Wednesday, Nov. 11, because of deteriorating air quality. The daylong mandatory curtailment will be in effect from midnight Tuesday through midnight Wednesday.

There are also wood-burning prohibitions in **Stanislaus, Fresno, Tulare and the Valley portion of Kern counties** for the same time period.

The curtailments apply to burning wood, pellets and manufactured fire logs. The wood-burning curtailment program, Check Before You Burn, runs each year from Nov. 1 through the last day of February and aims to reduce wintertime particulate pollution by restricting the use of wood-burning devices when air quality is forecast to deteriorate. Forecasts are issued on a county-by-county basis.

Residential wood burning pumps dangerous particulate matter (PM) into Valley skies. PM has been shown to cause bronchial infections, exacerbate respiratory and cardiac illness.

There are two levels of wood-burning forecast: "Wood burning Prohibited" or "Please Burn Cleanly," depending on expected air quality.

When a prohibition is declared, burning any solid fuel in a residential fireplace or wood-burning device is not permitted. There are two exceptions, however:

\* If the residence does not have access to natural-gas service, even if propane is available; or

\* If burning solid fuel is the sole source of heat for the residence.

Prohibition violations may be subject to fines.

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**First curtailment in Merced and Madera counties**

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Daily wood-burning forecasts are available each day at 4:30 p.m. at <http://www.valleyair.org/aqinfo/WoodBurnPage.htm>, by calling 1-800 SMOG INFO (766-4463), or by subscribing to the Air District's daily air quality forecast at <http://www.valleyair.org/lists/list.htm>. For more information about Check Before You Burn, call a District office in Fresno (559-230-6000), Modesto (209-557-6400) or Bakersfield (661-392-5500).