

# News Release

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For Immediate Release



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## Wood burning prohibited for Fresno and Stanislaus counties Mandatory curtailment is first of the season for Stanislaus

(Fresno, CA) – For the first time this season, the Valley Air District is prohibiting the use of wood-burning fireplaces, inserts and heating stoves in Stanislaus County for Tuesday, December 5. Tuesday also marks the third day of mandatory wood-burning curtailments in Fresno County this season.

The curtailments, prompted by poor air quality, are in effect all day Tuesday, from midnight to midnight. They may be extended on a day-to-day basis, depending on air-quality conditions. Violations of mandatory curtailments can result in fines.

Due to poor air quality expected throughout the San Joaquin Valley on Tuesday, residents in the counties of Tulare, Madera, Merced, San Joaquin and the Valley portion of Kern are asked to voluntarily refrain from using wood-burning heaters and fireplaces.

Air quality in Fresno and Stanislaus counties is expected to reach 152 on the Air Quality Index. At that level, air quality is considered unhealthy for the general public and wood burning is prohibited. Stagnant air and poor dispersion have caused particulates to build up, causing air quality to reach unhealthy levels.

When mandatory wood-burning curtailments are in place, Air District inspectors perform surveillance and investigate complaints. To report violations, residents may call the Air District during work hours and after-hours at:

- 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.

Mandatory curtailments do not apply to: cooking devices or any devices that use natural gas or propane exclusively; homes and businesses that don't have connections to natural-gas service; homes and businesses in areas 3,000 feet or higher in elevation; and homes in which no other heating device exists and wood-burning is the sole source of heat.

The Check Before You Burn program, which runs Nov. 1 through Feb. 28, aims to reduce fall and wintertime air pollution in the San Joaquin Valley. The daily wood-burning status and air-quality forecast is issued on a county-wide basis and is available in English and Spanish toll-free at 1-800 SMOG INFO (1-800-766-4463) and at [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org). Updates in Hmong are available toll-free at 1-877-344-1212.

When wood burning is allowed, it should be done as cleanly as possible, by using devices manufactured to meet the EPA's July 1990 emissions standards or pellet-fueled heaters, or by burning manufactured firelogs in open fireplaces. It is illegal to burn garbage or treated wood either in a fireplace or outdoors at any time. Additionally, the wood-burning curtailment program should not be confused with other Air District programs that regulate hazard-reduction burning, prescribed burning and agricultural burning.

The Valley Air District serves eight counties including San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Merced, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare and the valley portion of Kern. For assistance, contact the nearest District office in Modesto at (209) 557-6400, Fresno (559) 230-6000 or Bakersfield (661) 326-6900, or visit [www.valleyair.org](http://www.valleyair.org).

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