

# News Release

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For Immediate Release



San Joaquin Valley  
Air Pollution  
Control District

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**Weather sections**

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## First-ever wood fireplace ban issued in Kings County Wood burning discouraged in six other Valley counties

(Fresno, CA) - For the first time since the adoption of the Check Before You Burn program, the Valley Air District is prohibiting the use of wood-burning fireplaces, inserts and heating stoves in Kings County. The mandatory curtailment is in effect from midnight Friday to midnight Saturday.

A mandatory curtailment in effect today for Fresno County will be lifted as of midnight because of slightly improved air quality, attributed in part to residents complying with the prohibition. The public is asked, however, to voluntarily refrain from using wood-burning heaters and fireplaces tomorrow in Fresno, Tulare, Madera, Merced, Stanislaus and the Valley portion of Kern counties.

The mandatory curtailment in Kings County has been prompted by an air-quality forecast of 152 on the Air Quality Index. At that level, air quality is unhealthy for the general public. Stagnant air and poor dispersion have caused particulates to build up, making air quality poor.

Tomorrow's curtailment in Kings County is the first in the county since the start of the Check Before You Burn program in November 2003. Violations can result in fines.

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. When air quality is expected to be unhealthy for the general public, the Air District prohibits the use of wood-burning fireplaces, inserts and heating stoves.

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

The daily wood-burning status 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.

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