

Environmental Quality Board  
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Summary page

Environmental Quality Board:

I am writing to make known that I definitely see a need for this proposed rulemaking becoming law. DEP needs to step up and protect the environment, with the NESCAUM report there is ample information to follow through with this rule. DEP should follow the NESCAUM recommendation of 5 feet above the roof line for the chimney height and not 2 feet as proposed by Pa DEP rulemaking. Also there should be no burning in the summer. Let people enjoy their backyards. My whole family has had adverse reactions, illnesses from wood smoke, please help.

The statement that only a few people are complaining about wood smoke, but there are reasons. Some people don't understand the negative health effects of wood smoke. Others worry about losing property value if it is public knowledge that people will become ill if they would purchase the property. Even retaliation from the offender, as they will increase the smoke coming from that property.

Some advice is to just close your windows and stay indoors. This sounds at first to be a reasonable way to mitigate the health affects of the wood smoke. But all houses have negative air pressure, warm air leaks out of small cracks at window, doors, wall receptacles, etc... A recent study shows that wood smoke pollution indoors can be almost as high as the pollution levels outdoors, even in homes that do not burn wood. #1 In fact the minimum recommended air exchanges for good health is .35 air exchanges per hour and not less than 15 cubic feet per minute per person. #2 To put a number to this a 2000 square foot home with 8 foot ceilings require 5600 cubic feet of outside air minimally. And remember this is every hour, for 24 hours 134,400 cubic feet of air exchange. And if the house is not new construction it will have air exchanges 3 to 6 times this amount. Wood and wood ash are known to be sources that bring mold and fungus into the home. Combustion does not kill mold spores, it spreads them.#3 This causes property damage and lung problems. Wood smoke particles are submicroscopic; this allows them to get past the lungs natural defenses. The particles get deep into the lung and stay there. Some will even go straight into the blood stream as they will pass right through the lungs into the blood vessels.#4 There are many chemicals released in wood smoke including arsenic, lead, CO etc.

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#1 <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/pubs/91br023.pdf>

#2 These standards are set by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE).

#3 "Interstitial Lung Disease and Domestic Wood Burning": Ramage, Roggli, bell and Piantadosi, AM REV RESPIR DIS 1988; 137:1229-1232

#4 Prof. P.K. Hopke, Dept. of Chemistry, Clarkson University, Potsdam, NY "Measurement of the Hygroscopicity of the Indoor Aerosol". Aug. 1996, Center for Indoor Air Research.