Dear xxx,

I am writing to you as I am very concerned about the health impacts of air pollution from wood burning stoves and open fires. I would like to ask you to use all available channels to inform residents of *(insert locality)* about the considerable amount of air pollution emitted when wood and smokeless fuels are burnt, and the subsequent health effects.

Domestic wood burning is a major contributor to local air pollution and even the newest “eco-friendly” Ecodesign wood burning stoves [emit high levels](https://eeb.org/library/where-theres-fire-theres-smoke-emissions-from-domestic-heating-with-wood/) of particulate matter. Particulate matter is one of the most [problematic pollutants](https://www.ippr.org/files/2018-10/1539184665_lethal-but-legal-october18.pdf) across the UK today, and most homes in the UK exceed the limits recommended by the World Health Organization. Particulate matter has been [associated with](https://www.blf.org.uk/sites/default/files/BLF%20Response%20Air%20quality%20using%20cleaner%20fuels%20for%20domestic%20burning.pdf) a range of conditions, including decreased lung development and function, exacerbation of asthma, allergies, COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder), pulmonary fibrosis and an increased risk of lung cancer.

With a [40% increase in wood burning stove sales](https://www.energylivenews.com/2022/10/03/britons-turn-to-wood-burning-to-tackle-soaring-energy-bills/) this year, it is clear that domestic wood burning is on the rise, even in smoke control zones. But the pollution and health impacts are huge: burning in a stove triples indoor air pollution, while burning in an open fire emits even higher levels of particulate matter into our living rooms and often into our neighbours’ houses too.

We are in the midst of a cost-of-living and energy crisis and burning indoors is often considered a cheaper way of heating. But nobody should need to resort to damaging the health of themselves, their families and their neighbours in order to stay warm this winter.

As a local authority, you have a responsibility to protect public health. I urge you to follow [Oxford City Council’s lead](https://www.oxford.gov.uk/news/article/2293/do_you_fuel_good_new_campaign_to_tackle_harmful_emissions_from_domestic_wood_burning) and use all your available channels (including social and print media) to inform and discourage domestic wood burning amongst residents, unless it is their only source of heat. Many people [are simply not aware](https://airqualitynews.com/2020/11/11/the-public-are-unaware-of-the-health-impacts-of-indoor-fires/) what a significant contribution wood burning makes to air pollution and the subsequent impact on respiratory health. I believe your residents need to be advised that any kind of burning results in high local pollution levels, and that when they burn they are polluting both themselves and their neighbours, leading to potentially serious health effects.

There are lots of resources available that might be useful, for example have a look at [Mums for Lungs](https://www.mumsforlungs.org/resources-and-downloads)’ wood burning flyers and the [Doctors + Scientists Against Wood Smoke Pollution](https://woodsmokepollution.org/) website.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

 *(Full name and postcode)*