

WOOD BURNING IS A LEADING CAUSE OF AIR POLLUTION IN THE UK

Burning wood can look beautiful and feel cosy, but the science is clear - if you can smell smoke, tiny particles of soot are gradually harming both your and your neighbours' health.

DO YOU REALLY NEED TO BURN WOOD?

Can you minimise the number of times a year you use your stove or fire? If you have central heating, do you need to burn wood at all?

THINK TWICE BEFORE YOU BUY A FIRE PIT OR STOVE

Burning wood in fire pits and stoves can cause your family, neighbours and friends serious health issues.

IF YOU MUST BURN, BURN WITH CARE

Even the newest Ecodesign stoves emit high levels of harmful pollution. If you must burn, ensure your wood is dry and your chimney is swept to reduce dangerous soot. Never burn treated or painted wood or any other kind of waste as these can release highly dangerous toxins like chromium and arsenic.



DID YOU KNOW?

- 1** Fine particulate matter (PM2.5) - essentially tiny particles of soot - is one of the most dangerous air pollutants. Breathing it in is linked to lung cancer, heart damage, strokes, impaired cognition and mental health problems, and can exacerbate conditions such as asthma, COPD and pulmonary fibrosis. Children and elderly people are most vulnerable.¹
- 2** Wood burning is a leading cause of this particulate matter. Government research shows more than a third of PM2.5 in the UK in 2019 came from domestic sources, including wood burning stoves, fireplaces, bonfires and firepits.² This makes wood burning a bigger source of PM2.5 than vehicles.
- 3** There is no such thing as clean burning. Even the newest, DEFRA-approved/ ecodesign stoves release particulates into homes and the wider neighbourhood, so wood smoke affects the health of your family and neighbours in the short and long term.
- 4** Wood burning is not a climate-friendly way of heating your home. The Climate Change Committee, which advises the government on reducing national carbon emissions, recommends that people with alternative sources of heating should avoid burning wood.³
- 5** Experts at Asthma UK and the British Lung Foundation have also asked people with wood burners to use them only if they have no alternative source of heat to avoid air pollution.

**TO FIND OUT MORE
ABOUT THE HARMS OF
WOODBURNING,
VISIT [BIT.LY/M4LINFO](http://bit.ly/m4linfo)**

1 Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs: [Public Health: Sources and Effects of PM2.5](#)

2 Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs: [Emissions of air pollutants in the UK – Particulate matter \(PM10 and PM2.5\)](#)

3 <http://bit.ly/AvoidBurning>