



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NWCAA urges voluntary limits on wood burning in Columbia Valley area due to possible air quality impacts

The [Northwest Clean Air Agency](#) is urging residents in the Columbia Valley urban growth area of Whatcom County (including the Peaceful Valley and Paradise Lakes developments) to limit burning wood for home heating because of cold, still weather conditions.

Conditions are not expected to change for the next few days. Limiting wood burning would reduce smoke, even if it is your only source of heat. Cold, still air keeps fine smoke particles from clearing out, which impacts air quality.

NWCAA is not calling for an air quality burn ban at this time.

Burning wood for home heating – especially when it isn't done correctly – can produce smoke pollution that can harm you, your family and your neighbors. Fine particles in smoke can be inhaled deeply into lungs and damage delicate tissues.

Smoke pollution can trigger asthma attacks, cause difficulty breathing, and make lung and heart problems worse. Elevated levels of smoke can be especially harmful to children, people with heart and lung problems, and adults age 65 and older.

Air quality may improve throughout the day. But smoke levels will build as temperatures drop and more people light fires to heat homes.

If you must burn wood for heat, burn small, hot fires. Check your chimney 20 minutes after lighting a fire to ensure that it is not smoking, and if it is, take action. Do not let fires smolder overnight.

If a ban is called, check NWCAA's website (<https://nwcleanairwa.gov/>), @NWCleanAir on Twitter, and NWCAA's Facebook page for up-to-date burn ban information.

More information

- Local air quality information: [Northwest Clean Air Agency](#).
- Statewide air quality monitoring: [Washington Department of Ecology](#).

The Northwest Clean Air Agency is responsible for enforcing federal, state and local air quality regulations in Island, Skagit, and Whatcom counties. In addition to permitting and regulating industrial sources of air pollution, the agency provides services and information related to asbestos, indoor air quality, outdoor burning, woodstoves and fireplaces. More information about the agency is available at <https://nwcleanairwa.gov/>.