



BAY AREA
AIR QUALITY
MANAGEMENT
DISTRICT

Request for Comments

November 6, 2024

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES
FROM: EXECUTIVE OFFICER / APCO
SUBJECT: **Request for Comments – Woodsmoke White Paper**

The staff of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) is requesting comments on a White Paper detailing our current understanding of woodsmoke emissions in the Bay Area.

BACKGROUND

Air District Staff consider woodsmoke as an important source to evaluate as it represents over 10 percent of the fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) emissions in the region on an annual basis with an even greater impact during the winter. The Air District has also committed to explore woodsmoke mitigation options through concerns identified in Assembly Bill (AB) 617 communities: West Oakland Community Action Plan (WOCAP) Further Study Measure #5 and Richmond-North Richmond-San Pablo Path to Clean Air (PTCA) Public Health Action (H) 2.5.

WHITE PAPER

Staff have developed a White Paper detailing our current understanding of woodsmoke emissions in the Bay Area. The White Paper provides extensive information on wood burning in the Bay Area, the current state of the regulatory landscape for wood-burning devices, and a discussion of potential recommendations to further minimize woodsmoke emissions and exposures. Given the significance of the source and the known health impacts, Staff recommend developing policies to further minimize woodsmoke emissions and exposures, focused on wood burning for the purposes of ambiance or aesthetics (not as a primary source of heat). This includes consideration of the following potential amendments to Regulation 6, Rule 3: Wood-Burning Devices:

- Strengthening the Air District's burn curtailment (i.e. periodic wood burning ban) program; and
- Accelerating the disabling and turnover of dirtier wood-burning devices.

Staff is seeking input on the level of stringency and mechanism for these proposed policy changes.

This White Paper is intended to be the first step in potential Air District rule development. It is important to note that Staff have not yet extensively evaluated impacts nor the required resources to explore potential policies or rule development efforts due to the wide range of possible mitigation strategies under consideration. An in-depth assessment of these impacts will take place during the development of potential rule amendments, with ample opportunities for stakeholder engagement prior to any proposal for Board consideration. Next steps in this woodsmoke policy initiative will include robust community and stakeholder engagement tailored to the response and public comment received on this White Paper and the policy options presented.

INFORMATION AND COMMENTS

Staff requests comments and questions about the Woodsmoke White Paper. Following this Request for Comments and closing of the public comment period, staff will assess potential rule development.

For copies of the Woodsmoke White Paper, please visit our website at www.baaqmd.gov/ruledev or submit a request to Rule Development at (415) 749-4653 or woodsmokerule@baaqmd.gov. Interested parties are invited to submit questions or comments on the Woodsmoke White Paper to Rule Development at woodsmokerule@baaqmd.gov. The deadline to submit comments on these materials is Monday, January 20, 2025, at 5:00 p.m.