

Woodstove Change-out Meeting

Introduction

The Washoe County District Health Department (WCDHD) – Air Quality Management Division (AQMD) has developed a successful residential wood combustion program that addresses the issues by curtailment, preventative measures and regulation compliance. The ambient air quality levels have significantly improved since the implementation of this program. In addition to the public awareness/education component, a change-out process is based on residential transfer of ownership. The final aspect involves the installation of new devices regulated by lot size.

In fall 1987 the AQMD adopted regulations for woodstove/fireplace devices covering emission standards, issuance of installation permits including limitations, sale of approved devices, and the forms and procedures required to ensure compliance with the regulations. These regulations have been revised periodically to reflect changing dynamics of the Truckee Meadows as well as industry and regulatory agency standards. The Division also maintains an approved woodstove list that is updated as new devices are reported by local dealers or by clients wishing to purchase from sources outside the Truckee Meadows.

In February 2006, revisions to the regulations were adopted to maintain program effectiveness and accommodate newer technologies. The modifications set a minimum one-acre lot size for wood stove installation, allowed all new pellet stoves to be classified as “low-emitting”, and clarified additional Regulation language.

Device Replacement or Sale

Regulation 040.050, Sections D and E grant authority for the inspection of a residence containing a solid-fuel burning device prior to change of ownership and for the forms that ensure compliance with the program. The AQMD has received excellent cooperation from the local building departments and the various title companies who are necessary components for the success of the program.

1. The AQMD provides a list of independent, approved inspectors for realtors and the general public. The inspectors are trained in the regulation requirements and the use of the reporting forms (Residential Wood Stove Inspection).
 - a. The inspection of the residence and the completion of the reporting form are the first step in the process.
 - b. AQMD staff issues a Certificate of Compliance to the appropriate title company so that the escrow process can be completed.

2. When a residence does not contain a solid-fuel burning device or there is only a fireplace, the Notice of Exemption form is completed through the title company during the escrow process.
 - a. Uncertified devices must be removed from the property prior to sale.
 - b. This form is also used to indicate self-contained, sealed gas devices that are exempt.
3. The Dealers Affidavit of Sale form is required before a building department will issue a permit for the installation of new or replacement devices.
 - a. It is unlawful to install an uncertified device.

Education and Public Outreach

The Green-Yellow-Red Wood Burning guide is a public awareness program developed to assist in the curtailment of emissions based on the Air Quality Index during winter months when surface inversions and meteorological conditions prevent dispersion of pollutants. Local media resources announce daily the applicable color code: Green means no restrictions, Yellow is a voluntary reduction and Red is a mandatory stop burning of solid fuels. The Division also maintains a 24-hour recorded message phone line, which is updated morning and afternoon.

AQMD staff is available for presentations to community agencies and target audiences on the different aspects of the program including understanding and complying with the regulations, completion of required forms, and the effectiveness in achieving optimal air quality. The Division has a full time Public Information Officer.

Changeout Rebate Project

Building on the success of the Woodstove Changeout Rebate Project in 2005, the Division has again partnered with the University of Nevada, Reno Nevada Small Business Development Center for a changeout rebate project in Spring 2007 targeting pre-1992 stoves. Participant survey results indicated that the majority made their decision to replace their older woodburning device because of the rebate program. For this project, the rebate will be issued based on a three-tiered system with \$300 allocated for a new woodstove, \$400 for a new pellet stove and \$500 for replacement with a gas device. Retailers will offer a minimum of an additional \$100 discount per unit with promotional materials provided for use in the participating stores. The retailer will verify the old device has been delivered to the salvage company for proper disposal.