

# Wood smoke can take your breath away!

Consider the air we share. Be smoke aware.



## How does wood smoke affect you and your neighbours?

For many Victorians, wood heaters are a much-loved – and for some – essential source of warmth. However, they are a key cause of poor air quality both in and outside the home in the cooler months.

Smoke from wood heaters contains fine particles and gases which can affect you and your neighbours' health. They can get deep into your lungs and blood stream and make existing health conditions worse.

Although anyone's health can be impacted by wood smoke, those most likely to be affected are people with existing heart or lung conditions, those with asthma, diabetes, pregnant women, infants and young children, and those aged 65 and over.

For more information  
on health impacts  
and resources scan  
this QR code:



## How can I reduce wood smoke?

More than 50 per cent of Melbourne's fine particle emissions come from wood heaters.

If you own a wood heater, you can take the following steps to reduce your smoke:

1. Where possible, consider using alternative ways of heating your house, especially on calm days with not much wind, as smoke from wood heaters can build up in these conditions.
2. Have your wood heater and flue serviced each year by a professional.
3. Use only dry, seasoned and untreated wood.
4. Never burn plastics or foam, painted wood or treated timber (for example, railway sleepers or fence palings). These generate toxic fumes in addition to wood smoke air pollutants.
5. Only use small or medium pieces of wood and avoid overloading your heater, as this will starve the fire of oxygen and cause it to smoulder.
6. Wait for the fire to establish before adding extra fuel.
7. Open the air controls for a few minutes before adding fuel; then, after reloading, wait until the fire is burning before turning the air controls down.
8. Don't let your fire smoulder overnight. Fine particle levels can build up overnight and early morning during calm and cold conditions.

For more information on how to reduce smoke and improve air quality, scan this QR code:



## Tips for keeping your house warm

1. Choose an alternative form of heating where possible e.g., electric reverse cycle air conditioner.
2. Reduce heat leakage, pull down blinds and curtains, close any rooms not in use, seal off draughts – get your door snake.
3. Check the insulation for your ceilings, walls and floors.

For more information on energy efficiency and available rebates, scan here:



Learn more about wood smoke pollution by scanning this QR code:



If you want to report wood smoke, you can contact your local council.

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