

## The Setting

Ahhh...the warmth of a fire in a wood stove or fireplace. For some, this means a source of heat for a home. For others, the “warmth” given off by a wood fire is in the ambiance of the fire itself — the crackle, the glow, a sense of comfort on a cold winter’s day.

Whether used for heating, ambiance, or both, wood stoves, fireplaces, and other wood burning appliances are common in Idaho. Unfortunately, the air pollution created from improper wood burning can be common as well.

This doesn’t have to be the case. The type of stove or fireplace you have, the type of wood you burn, and the way you burn all affect how your fire impacts air quality.

Burning clean has many benefits. Not only do you lessen your impact on air quality and its impact on health, but burning clean uses less wood and produces more heat (both of which save you money), is safer than improper burning, and helps keep smoke from recirculating into your house.



### I’m concerned about smoke from my neighbor’s fire. What should I do?

If you’re concerned about smoke from someone else’s fire, contact your nearest DEQ regional office for assistance (see reverse).

## For More Information

### Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

#### State Office Air Quality Division

1410 N. Hilton  
Boise, ID 83706  
(208) 373-0502

#### Regional Offices

##### Boise

1445 N. Orchard  
Boise, ID 83706  
(208) 373-0550  
toll-free: (888) 800-3480

##### Coeur d’Alene

2110 Ironwood Parkway  
Coeur d’Alene, ID 83814  
(208) 769-1422  
toll-free: (877) 370-0017

##### Idaho Falls

900 N. Skyline, Suite B  
Idaho Falls, ID 83402  
(208) 528-2650  
toll-free: (800) 232-4635

##### Lewiston

1118 F Street  
Lewiston, ID 83501  
(208) 799-4370  
toll-free: (877) 541-3304

##### Pocatello

444 Hospital Way #300  
Pocatello, ID 83201  
(208) 236-6160  
toll-free: (888) 655-6160

##### Twin Falls

650 Addison Ave. W,  
Suite 110  
Twin Falls, ID 83301  
(208) 736-2190  
toll-free: (800) 270-1663

## DEQ Web Resources

#### Air Quality Index

[www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality-monitoring](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality-monitoring)

#### Daily Air Quality Reports

[www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx)

#### Wood Stoves

[www.deq.idaho.gov/wood-stoves](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/wood-stoves)

#### Wood Stove Replacements and the Idaho Tax Deduction

[www.deq.idaho.gov/wood-stoves-tax-deduction](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/wood-stoves-tax-deduction)



Printed on recycled paper. DEQ February 2017. PID 0205,  
CA 30060. Costs associated with this publication are available  
from the State of Idaho Department of Environmental Quality in  
accordance with Section 60-202, Idaho Code.

# Burn Clean, Burn Smart



Idaho Department of  
Environmental Quality  
[www.deq.idaho.gov](http://www.deq.idaho.gov)



## The Stove

For hundreds of years, home wood heating technology changed very little. Then, in the 1980s, air pollution problems across the country were linked to smoke from wood stoves. Soon, wood stove manufacturers were required to design cleaner stoves.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires manufacturers of wood stoves to produce clean-burning stoves. Wood stoves built after July 1, 1988, must be certified by EPA and cannot produce smoke-related pollutants beyond certain limits.



Idaho offers taxpayers a tax deduction when purchasing new wood stoves, pellet stoves, or natural gas or propane heating units for residences to replace old, uncertified wood stoves.

In addition, compared to old wood stoves, newer wood stoves:

- Use two-thirds less wood.
- Circulate heat more efficiently, so it stays in your home instead of going out the flue.
- Deposit less creosote buildup in chimneys, meaning less cleaning for you!
- Emit 50% to 60% less air pollution.

## The Fire

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality urges people who choose to burn wood to burn clean and burn smart. Follow these simple guidelines to reduce smoke and creosote buildup:

- ***Burn the right materials.*** Only burn clean and dry wood, pellets, or manufactured logs. Do not burn trash, plastics, or treated materials.
- ***Make sure your wood is dry.*** Dry wood creates hotter fires and less smoke.
- ***Burn smaller, hotter fires.*** When starting a fire, keep the damper and other air inlets open for 20 to 30 minutes to allow in enough air to fuel a hot fire. Establish a bed of coals before adding large logs.
- ***Allow enough room for air to circulate.*** Avoid overloading your stove or fireplace.
- ***Regularly inspect, maintain, and clean your stove/fireplace and chimney.***
- ***Watch your smoke signals!*** If you're sending up a lot of smoke, chances are you're burning incorrectly and potentially illegally. Once established, a properly burning fire should give off only a thin wisp of white steam. If you see dark smoke, adjust your dampers or air inlets to let in more air.
- ***Use EPA-certified wood-burning appliances.***

**The darker or thicker the smoke, the more pollutants it contains and the more fuel is being wasted.**

## The Reason

### Protect Your Health

Smoke from wood burning, especially from a poorly burning fire, can make our air unhealthy to breathe. Common health effects from breathing wood smoke include congestion, headaches, and itchy eyes. Inhaling wood smoke can also lead to serious long-term health problems.

### Save Money

Burning clean and burning smart can save you money. Burning dry wood produces hotter, cleaner-burning fires than wet wood. Hot, clean-burning fires also prevent creosote buildup, which reduces your chimney cleaning costs and can reduce the potential for a chimney fire.

### Obey the Law

**Opacity.** If your smoke is opaque (dark or dense), it is an indication your stove or fireplace is not burning clean. You may be wasting fuel, jeopardizing your health, and potentially breaking the law.

**Burn Bans.** A burn ban is a voluntary or mandatory order that restricts burning when an area's air quality is worsening and human health may be impacted. To find out about burn restrictions in your area:

- Tune in to your local radio or television station.
- Log on to DEQ's Daily Air Quality Reports Webpage at [www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx](http://www.deq.idaho.gov/air-quality/monitoring/daily-reports-and-forecasts.aspx)
- Contact your nearest DEQ regional office or city or county government.