From the AIR PROGRAM

Burn Wise Program of U.S. EPA

Burn Permit Updates

Permits are required for outdoor burning. On "YES" days only. The Air Program thanks everyone who has renewed and followed the rules of their permits. Permits are good for the year until Dec 31st.

Currently, for burn permit applications and renewals, ALL applicants please contact the Air Quality Specialist at 760-784-4037 or Natural Resources Specialist at 760-784-5763.

You may download and complete the fillable application form prior to calling us, available at http://bishoptribeemo.com/burn_permits.htm

FOR ALL PERMITS You must wait until EMO has made contact with you for a mandatory phone consultation before you are permitted, so if you leave a message we will get back to you ASAP. By submitting the application you thereby agree to the permit conditions. Once EMO finalizes your permit, a **confirmation number will be assigned by EMO**.

Why must outdoor burns be OUT BY NOON? In the Owens Valley, the winds typically pick up in the afternoon, making it possible for even a small fire to get out of control. In addition, if you put your fire out by noon, but have a flare up, it will happenduring daylight hours when you can more easily manage it.

Acceptable Materials for Burning Acceptable materials are restricted to vegetative waste (yard waste), cardboard and non-glossy paper to prevent the release harmful chemicals into the air. Other materials when burned may release toxic chemicals. A simple ruleof thumb for burning is "If it smells bad, it's bad for you."

Wood and Pellet Stove Updates

In 2020, the BPT Air Program remotely attended a Woodstoves Workshop hosted by EPA, Hearth Patio & BBQ Assoc., (and others), which included speakers from air agencies and commercial representatives on many topics related to woods, pellet, and hybrid stoves. Advances in stove testing, technology, particulate matter data collection, and focus on attaining national health standards for particulates in some areas with valley smoke pollution has led to new performance specifications for EPA certified stoves. Specification tiering began in 2015 and will become final in May 2020, so that after then, retailers may only sell 2020 certified stoves. There are no restrictions placed by EPA on homeowners to operate older stoves. Stoves purchased between 2015—May 2020 are currently EPA certified. Depending on each model's design, some may not have changed much, whereas others have fundamental changes or are replaced or retired. There has been a list of the 2015-2020 EPA certified stoves posted at EMO-A since EPA made the comprehensive list in 2018. Some recommendations and notes from the experts are:

⇒ Look for efficiencies >70%; firebox volume may be a better indicator of efficiency than Btu output claimed by a vendor, or just use the EPA certification list with efficiencies
⇒ Single burn rate stoves burn hotter and may eliminate some operator error
⇒ New models may have lots of tech options to navigate including "smart stoves", sensors, and catalytic/after-market parts, but a heat pump (like a mini-split) and a pellet stove may be a good combo to aim for.
⇒ Consider inserting an EPA-certified pellet stove/flue into an existing fireplace instead of changing out woodstove, if possible
⇒ Chimneys and flues are a critical component which make or break safe and clean usage on any stove; improvements to a chimney may achieve cleaner and safer burning than replacing a stove
⇒ Clearances from combustible materials are critical with chimneys for fire safety
⇒ Draft is critical, is partly what determines efficiency; on closed appliances avoid tees, elbows, horizontal runs in piping which cause friction—taller is better, but no wider than a stove's flue collar, to avoid reducing heat-driven draft

According to the National Fire Protection Association, heating equipment (including wood stoves) is the second leading cause of home fires. Further, the leading factor contributing to fires from home heating (30%) was due to having a dirty or clogged chimney (i.e., creosote buildup). Have your chimney cleaned & inspected by a professional at least bi-annually (EPA recommends annually). You can also get some creosote conditioner/remover from your local hardware store; READ the instructions carefully or ASK the vendors about it. Pictured: Imperial Creosote Conditioner available at Manor True Value.

As expert woodsmen and woodswomen know, not all wood is the same. Softwoods, such as Douglas fir, need six months to dry. Hardwoods like oak need at least 12 months. Treated lumber emits toxic fumes. You can buy a basic moisture meter ($20-$40) at a hardware store or online to test the moisture content of your wood before burning. Split the wood and test the newly split side of the wood for an accurate reading. The guideline is that wood should only be burned indoors for heat if the moisture content is 20% or less. Typically in our area, especially in the fall and early winter, wood is dry. The times to check are after storms, or when wood is stored with low airflow in damp areas.

The Air Program can find answers to your home heating questions! Call us 784-9308