

Health Impacts of Wood Burning

When air pollution levels are on the rise and weather conditions create dry, stagnant conditions, the Maricopa County Air Quality Department may issue a **No Burn Day**. The purpose of the No Burn Day is to avoid adding pollution to our air when the forecast suggests air quality will approach or exceed the federal health standard.

Did You Know?

**Wood smoke
can trigger
asthma.** (EPA.gov)



Every year around the holidays, valley hospitals see a noticeable increase of patients with respiratory issues due to smoke from fireplaces, fire pits and open outdoor fires. Most patients are children and the elderly, but even the healthiest adults can be affected.



Why is Smoke so Bad?

Smoke is a mixture of gases and fine particles produced when wood and other organic matter burn. A major health threat from smoke comes from fine particles (also referred to as particulate matter or PM). Particulate exposure can lead to a variety of health effects, both long- and short-term. Children under 18, older adults, and people with diabetes, heart disease, asthma, or other lung diseases are the most vulnerable.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), numerous scientific studies have linked particle pollution exposure to a variety of problems, including:

- Increased respiratory symptoms, such as irritation of the airways, coughing or difficulty breathing
- Decreased lung function
- Aggravated asthma
- Development of chronic bronchitis
- Irregular heartbeat
- Heart attacks
- Premature death of people with heart or lung disease

Notice an Air Quality Problem?

You may report an air quality problem or polluter at any time via our Clean Air app, calling the Maricopa County Air Quality Department at 602-372-2703, or filing a report online at [Maricopa.gov/AQ](https://www.maricopa.gov/AQ)