

Media Release

Environment Protection Authority



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New compliance standards for wood heaters

All solid fuel wood heaters that are sold and installed in South Australia from this month onwards must now comply with an Australian Standard for smoke emissions under the Environment Protection (Solid Fuel Heaters) Policy 2015.

Although the majority of new wood heaters that are currently sold in South Australia do conform to this Australian Standard, the introduction of this policy represents the first step to be consolidated through legislation.

EPA Director Strategy and Business, Roslyn Agate, said this policy is also part of the proposed Air Quality Policy to be consulted on later this year as an ongoing measure to regulate wood smoke.

“This will ultimately provide concise and unambiguous legislation for wood smoke emissions that has been an ongoing concern to many South Australians,” she said.

“It will bring us in line with all other states and prevent inferior or poorly engineered wood heaters from being offered for sale.”

This law will be followed by the consultation phase of the Environment Protection (Air Quality) Policy to be undertaken later this year.

It will also propose to restrict the visual presence of wood smoke and place prescriptive measures on the moisture content of wood before it can be used as a heat source.

“This means that anyone with a solid fuel heater will be required to use firewood with a moisture content of no higher than 20 percent,” Ms Agate said.

The Policy will also require installations of wood heaters to be carried out to the Australian Standard. Any alterations, including to its exhaust system, will be an offence.

“These new laws will lead to a cleaner environment by improving air quality in South Australia, particularly during winter when smoke pollution can increase the risk of health issues, especially for people with respiratory conditions such as asthma,” Ms Agate said.

It is estimated there are more than 900,000 households in Australia that use wood heating as their primary source of home heating, particularly in rural areas.

More information on wood heater smoke is available on the EPA website at www.epa.sa.gov.au

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