

Air Quality FAQ Page

What am I allowed to burn?

Indoor: **Only** dry, seasoned wood and clean, dry paper as a starter.

Outdoor: **Only** dry, limbs and leaves. No treated wood products are allowed. For a list of prohibited materials, [click here](#).

When can I burn?

The **ONLY** time you may burn outdoors **within the Air Quality Zone**, is when an Open Burning Window has been established by the Klamath County Air Quality Department. Call **882-BURN** for the most up to date information. No other entity has the authority to issue a Burn Window within the Air Quality Zone. [Click here](#), for an explanation of the Air Quality Advisories. Check with your local fire department for fire safety concerns.

What is the Air Quality Zone?

The Air Quality Zone contains the most populated areas of Klamath County. A buildup of pollution from automobiles, woodstoves, and industry more often occurs in the Air Quality Zone. The goal of the Air Quality Ordinance is to protect the health of those in sensitive groups such as children, elderly and those with poor health conditions. Air Quality is regulated by the EPA with help from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). Restrictions and penalties are assessed to achieve federal and state goals. [Click here](#) for Map of Air Quality Zone.

How do I know if my stove is certified?

All new stoves sold since 1992 must be certified by EPA. All certified stoves have a certification tag located on the back of the stove. Pellet stoves are clean burning and

are acceptable. [Click here](#) for a complete list of EPA certified Woodstoves and fireplaces.

What is the fine for illegal burning?

Currently, the first offense is \$600 – \$1000 for residents. Fines are subject to change. The fines & penalties may be substantially more for business and industry. The Oregon State Department of Environmental Quality also regulates business and industry violations.

Does Klamath County have good air quality?

In the winter months when wind, rain, and snow are plentiful, Klamath County generally has acceptable air quality. However, the County often has what's called an 'inversion' that prevents air from circulating and results in poor air quality. Air quality can worsen in an inversion rapidly.

Where can I find general information about air quality?

The U.S. EPA has an [Air now Web site](http://www.airnow.gov) (insert <http://www.airnow.gov>) with links to general information about air quality, including general background information and health information.

Are Burn Barrels Allowed? (*Find answer in ordinance*)

Currently, the ordinance does not prohibit burn barrels. Burn barrels may be banned in the future. Because burn barrels receive little oxygen, they create low-temperature fires that generate other toxic pollutants as well, such as benzene, styrene oxide, formaldehyde, dioxins and furans. Dioxins are produced in burn barrels at levels more than two times greater (per ton of refuse) than from municipal incinerators. Some metals (e.g., lead, cadmium and chromium) are also released.

Can these chemical emissions harm my family's health?

Yes. These pollutants are released into the air where they can be inhaled by those closest to or downwind from the source. They also deposit on leafy plants that are eaten by livestock. Dioxin accumulates in animal fat and is passed through meat and dairy products to humans.

My fireplace is my only source of heat in the winter. Do I still have to comply with the wood burning ban?

Yes. You can apply for an exemption. Exemptions are granted if your fireplace or woodstove is the sole source of heat. An exemption is granted for a temporary time period until the resident can obtain a second heating source such as gas, electric, etc.

It is against the Klamath County Air Ordinance to have less than 2 sources of heat for a home.