

Operating a heater efficiently

The amount of smoke a fire makes depends on how much oxygen is available, how hot the fire is, how green (or seasoned) the wood is and whether you have just started the fire or whether it is established.

A good fire needs good wood

- burn dry, seasoned, untreated wood
- stack wood under cover in a dry, ventilated area

When starting the fire

- use small, dry kindling to get the fire going quickly
- use smaller logs instead of large logs
- place a sheet of newspaper above your unlit fire to create a good updraft
- burn on high air-flow for 30 minutes after lighting

When the fire is burning well

- place the wood end-on into the firebox rather than sideways
- leave a minimum 2 cm gap between pieces of wood
- reload regularly to ensure rapid ignition of the new fuel, but do not overfill the heater
- burn on high air-flow for 20-25 minutes after adding wood to the fire
- keep the fire burning brightly so it doesn't smoulder

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Published 2018
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Improving air quality

REGULATIONS ON SMOKE EMISSIONS FROM WOOD HEATERS, FIREPLACES & COOKING APPLIANCES

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and Environment



Why does wood smoke from domestic heaters need to be regulated?

Smoke from wood heaters can contribute to high levels of fine particles in the air which are known to increase the incidence of heart and lung diseases in the community. Wood smoke can also be an environmental nuisance for neighbours. The *Environmental Management and Pollution Control (Distributed Atmospheric Emissions) Regulations 2018* control emissions of wood smoke from wood heaters into the atmosphere.

What do the regulations apply to?

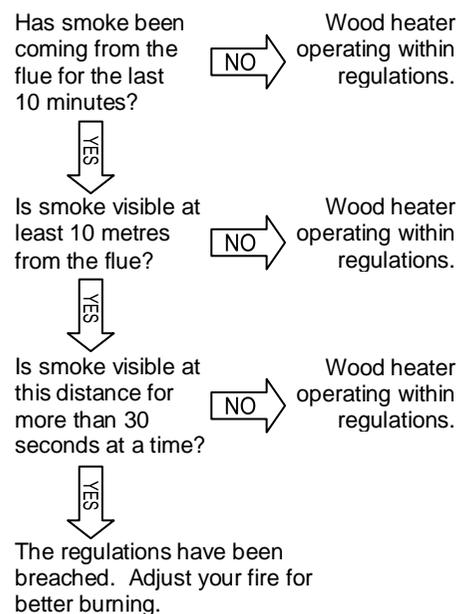
They apply to wood-burning heaters and open fireplaces used in homes, hotels, clubs and retail premises.

The smoke emission provisions also apply to fireplaces, solid fuel cooking appliances, hot water units and barbecues.

How can I tell if my wood heater is operating within the regulations?

A well-maintained heater should produce little visible smoke when a fire is burning well. The regulations are breached if a smoke-plume is visible from a chimney at a distance of 10 metres or more for at least 30 seconds. The smoke must also be generally visible for ten minutes.

Check your wood heater for smoke visibility (replace with updated flowchart)



Will the community be patrolled and fines issued for smoky wood heaters?

Under the regulations council officers may issue warnings and infringement notices. Usually education and informal warnings are the first step. Formal action is normally only taken if people persist in operating their wood heaters in a way that causes excessive smoke. Individual councils decide how to enforce the regulations. Councils might conduct patrols in areas where a particular problem with air quality has been identified.

How much will I be fined if smoke from my wood heater contravenes the regulations?

A council officer may issue you with an infringement notice (on-the-spot-fine) of 2 penalty units, or \$318*. If the matter is taken to court, the maximum penalty for visible smoke emissions is 10 penalty units or \$1590*. Court action is normally only taken if other approaches have failed.

How do I know if the wood heater I buy complies with the regulations?

Under the regulations all heaters sold in Tasmania, including second-hand units, must comply with the current Australian Standards for heater emissions and efficiency.

If you are buying a wood heater, make sure it has a compliance plate showing that it meets Australian Standards AS/NZS 4012-2014 and AS/NZS 4013-2014. The modification of wood heaters in any way that may increase smoke emissions is prohibited.

What types of fuel may be burnt?

In Tasmania most heaters burn wood. The burning of treated or painted wood, plastics, rubber and other unsuitable materials is prohibited.

**Penalties may be subject to variation or indexation.*