

# Wood and Solid Fuel Burning

..is a leading cause of air pollution in London and the second largest source of small particle (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) pollution. There is no safe level of exposure to this pollutant.

Burning wood and other solid fuels always produces health-damaging air pollution, even if no smoke is visible. The best way to help improve local air quality and protect everyone's health is to avoid burning solid fuels.

Wherever possible an alternative form of heating, such as electric or gas, should be used.

Most of London is a smoke control area. It is an offence for anyone to emit smoke from a chimney and it can lead to a fine of up to £300 for the occupier of the property.

For more information about the smoke control area rules, please visit [gov.uk/smoke-control-area-rules](https://www.gov.uk/smoke-control-area-rules)

To see whether you live in a smoke control area, please go to [uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/sca](https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/sca)

In smoke control areas it is only legal to burn certain "smokeless" or "authorised" fuels or to use an appliance that has been granted an exemption by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).



**Traditional house coal**

**No longer available for purchase**



**Authorised fuel**



**Fireplace**



**Other solid fuel stove**



**Wood logs**



**Defra exempt wood burning stove**

A Defra exempt appliance must only be used with the type of fuel permitted by Defra for that appliance.

Open fireplaces (hearths) and older stoves are not exempt, and it is illegal to burn anything other than a "smokeless" or "authorised" fuel.

## Fuels allowed in an open fireplace are:

- Anthracite
- Semi-anthracite
- Gas
- Low volatile steam coal
- Authorised fuels

## Unauthorised fuels include:

- Wood - except in exempt appliances that list wood as the permitted fuel
- House coal

Check the list of authorised fuels here [smokecontrol.defra.gov.uk/authorised-certified-fuels](https://www.smokecontrol.defra.gov.uk/authorised-certified-fuels)

Check the exempt appliances and permitted fuel here [smokecontrol.defra.gov.uk/exempt-appliances](https://www.smokecontrol.defra.gov.uk/exempt-appliances)

# WOOD BURNERS. IT'S SCARY WHAT THEY'RE DOING TO PUBLIC HEALTH.

Wood burners.  
Careless not cosy.



For more information, please visit the website [woodburning.london](http://woodburning.london)

LONDON  
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PROJECT



Even if a "smokeless" or "authorised" fuel, or a Defra exempt appliance is used, it is still an offence to emit smoke from a chimney and this can lead to a fine of up to £300. The penalty for breaking the smoke control area rules by obtaining unauthorised fuels to use in a non-exempt appliance is a fine of up to £1,000.

## PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions from heating vary widely as demonstrated below



## Very dirty



Less dirty

Clean

## Why do these rules exist?

Air pollution in London exceeds the World Health Organization's (WHO) guidelines. Burning wood, coal and other solid fuels at home emits dangerous pollution known as fine particulate matter (often referred to as PM<sub>2.5</sub>).

PM<sub>2.5</sub> has been classified by the WHO as a carcinogen and can cause asthma, heart disease and other serious illnesses affecting our lungs, hearts, and brains. Exposure to particulate air pollution can also trigger the symptoms of existing health conditions like asthma or heart disease.

Reducing air pollution, including from wood and solid fuel burning, will help to protect everyone's health.

For help keeping homes warm without burning solid fuels, please contact your council for energy advice.

If you see smoke coming from a chimney in your local area, you can report this to your local authority.