

# Blue Skies Ahead – Outdoor Wood Heaters that Reduce Air Emissions

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(10/23/08) Key manufacturers of outdoor wood-fired heaters pledged to make units that will emit 90 percent less air pollution, under the second phase of a voluntary partnership with EPA. EPA launched the voluntary program in January 2007, beginning with units 70 percent cleaner than unqualified models. Sales of EPA-qualified units to date will prevent nearly 1,200 tons of fine particle emissions annually, providing more than \$600 million in estimated annual health benefits.

Outdoor wood-burning heaters -- also called outdoor wood boilers, outdoor wood furnaces, or wood-fired hydronic heaters (systems that circulate hot water or steam) -- provide heat and hot water for homes and other buildings. Use of the heaters has increased in recent years in rural, cold climate areas where wood is plentiful, like New England, prompting concerns about smoke and emissions of particle pollution.

Under a voluntary agreement with EPA, seven heater manufacturers have pledged to make at least one unit meeting new, stringent emission levels in the second phase of the program. The new models must emit no more than 0.32 pounds of particle pollution per million Btu of heat output. The models must be tested by an EPA-accredited laboratory to verify these emission levels.

Phase 2 also allows additional types of heaters to qualify, including indoor hydronic heaters, models that burn other biomass such as corn or wood pellets, and models equipped with heat storage units. Qualified Phase 2 models will be marked by a white hang tag showing that a unit meets the requirements of the program. Some manufacturers already have units available that meet the new emission levels.

Exposure to fine particle pollution, also called PM 2.5, is linked to a number of serious health problems including decreased lung function, aggravated asthma, irregular heartbeat, nonfatal heart attacks and premature death in people with heart and lung disease. Children, people with heart or lung disease, and older adults are the most susceptible to the effects of particle pollution.

EPA developed the program with input from heater manufacturers, states, the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management, and the Hearth Patio & Barbecue Association, an industry trade group.

[Information on outdoor wood heaters and the voluntary partnership: epa.gov/woodheaters](http://epa.gov/woodheaters)

The manufacturers agreeing to make cleaner outdoor wood heaters are:

Alternative Fuel Boilers (Econoburn)  
Central Boiler  
Greenwood Technologies  
Hardy Manufacturing  
HeatSource1  
Northwest Manufacturing (WoodMaster)  
Silverwinds Metals Inc. (Wood Doctor)