

ON THE AIR

Fall
2010

A Newsletter about
Clean Air. Provided
by Spokane Regional
Clean Air Agency.

Compliance Inspections at Commercial/Industrial Facilities

Spokane Clean Air implements many programs that are designed to improve air quality by reducing emissions from various sources of air pollution. This includes commercial and industrial facilities identified as air contaminant sources, which collectively account for roughly 18% of the air pollution in the Spokane Area. These businesses are registered and inspected annually to verify that proper practices and controls are being used to capture emissions and that air quality regulations are being met.



Inspections may be conducted for any of the following reasons:

- ▲ assist the facility with registration and/or air quality permit, called a Notice of Construction (NOC)
- ▲ verify initial compliance with permit approvals
- ▲ verify continuing compliance with air quality regulations and NOC approvals
- ▲ provide compliance assistance at the request of the facility
- ▲ respond to air quality complaints made by the public

Information gathered at an inspection varies depending on the type of facility being inspected and the purpose of the inspection. Basic elements of most inspections include:

- ▲ confirm the number of air pollution sources and/or air pollution control equipment matches the permit
- ▲ verify that equipment is being operated and maintained properly
- ▲ verify that all air quality regulations and NOC approval conditions are being met

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What types of operations are regulated ?

Surface coating
Gasoline dispensing
Boilers, incinerators,
afterburners
Dry cleaning
Wood working
Asphalt, concrete, aggregate
Grain handling
Abrasive blasting
Fiberglass, plastic
Metal plating
Foundry

In addition to these
operations, Spokane
Clean Air enforces
federal, state and
local rules related to:

Indoor wood heating
Outdoor burning
Dust and smoke emissions
Asbestos removal, disposal
Odors and nuisances

Fuel for thought: Recreational Fires

More people are turning to backyard/patio heating devices as a way to extend summer and the “outdoor living” season. These devices burn either wood, propane, natural gas or charcoal and are growing in popularity. They include chimineas, patio heaters, fire bowls and other portable devices that are commonly sold at home improvement stores and mass retailers. **These devices are considered recreational fires under state and local regulations.**

Recreational fires are allowed throughout Spokane County, but only under specific requirements per state and local regulations. Failure to follow rules can result in a fine, putting a damper on your outdoor fun. So before you purchase or use one of these devices, inform yourself on the requirements.

Recreational Fires - Rules to Follow:

Keep it small not tall. Fires must not exceed three feet in diameter or two feet in height.

Fuel it right. Only approved fuels may be used: charcoal, natural gas, propane, firewood. Firewood must be dry, clean and natural (untreated) or manufactured logs. The fire cannot be used to dispose of anything, including paper, natural vegetation, garbage, etc.

Stay clear of structures. Check with your local fire department regarding setback requirements.

Stand guard and extinguish. A person capable of extinguishing the fire must attend it at all times, and the fire must be completely extinguished before leaving it.

Ask first. Permission from a landowner, or owner’s designated representative, must be obtained before starting a recreational fire.

Mind the ban. Check for temporary outdoor burn restrictions before using your device. A ban may be issued by Spokane Clean Air if air quality is declining. More often and especially during the dry summer months, burning may be restricted by fire officials due to elevated fire danger.



Spokane Clean Air posts these notices on our Burn Info Hotline at 477-4710 and online at www.spokanecleanair.org/burning_conditions.asp

Be a good neighbor. If smoke from your recreational fire bothers your neighbors, poses a threat or causes damage to their property or otherwise causes a nuisance, you must put it out immediately. For these reasons, you may wish to consider purchasing gas or electric devices versus wood burning units.

Do your homework. Building permits may be required for the installation of certain recreational fire devices (gas/propane appliances), check with your local building department. Other

local rules may apply to your use of a recreational-type fire, such as homeowner association covenants, rental agreements, etc.—so be sure to check first before purchasing or using a device.

Smoke and Your Health

Before investing in a wood-fueled device, consider health impacts of smoke. Burning even natural, untreated firewood creates microscopic smoke particles that can affect you, your family members and neighbors.

Smoke particles are 1/40 to 1/100 the size of a grain of table salt.

Particles contain toxic compounds that when inhaled, collect in the lungs, causing structural and chemical changes, as well as damage to the alveoli (tiny air sacs where oxygen enters the blood stream). Those

at greatest risk are young children, the elderly, and those with existing heart and lung conditions.

Want to enjoy your backyard but prefer a healthier alternative to take off the chill? There are many types of patio heaters and recreational fire devices that use natural gas, propane or electricity.

For more information, please contact the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency, (509) 477-4727 or www.spokanecleanair.org

Heat with wood?

Tips to save money & stay warm

Did you know that changing the way you burn wood could save you money, reduce air pollution, improve air quality in your home and outdoors, and avoid a fine?

Here are a few tips to make your fire burn hotter, keep your wallet fatter and keep your air cleaner and healthier.

Season all firewood. All firewood should be split, stacked and loosely covered to “seasoned” for at least six months. Seasoned wood burns hotter, cuts fuel consumption and reduces the amount of smoke your appliance produces.

Choose the right firewood. Hardwoods are the best. Manufactured logs and pellets are okay to burn, but never burn trash or treated wood which can emit toxic air pollutants.

Don't let the fire smolder. Many people think they should let a fire smolder. In fact, reducing the air supply does little for heating and can create excess smoke. After an initial start-up period, take a look at your chimney. You should see very little, if any, smoke.

Clean ashes from your wood burning appliance. Excess ashes can clog the air intake vents reducing efficiency. Be sure to dispose of ashes in a metal container away from the house or any flammable material to reduce to the risk of fire.

Keep your chimney clean to allow a good draft and to reduce risk of a chimney fire. Have a certified chimney sweep inspect your chimney at least once a year.

Be a good neighbor. Follow best practices for burning wood and always remember to comply with state and

local requirements for wood heating. Two key requirements are related to following burn bans and not emitting too much smoke. To learn more about these requirements, visit www.spokane-cleanair.org/wood_heating.asp.

Follow manufacturer's instructions for operation and maintenance of your wood burning appliance.

Upgrade to cleaner, more efficient equipment. Today's wood burning devices are more efficient and use at least 30% less wood. They also have lower emissions when operated properly, which means healthier air indoors and outside.

Size matters. Choose the right sized appliance for your needs. If your device is too big for your heating area, the fuel will smolder at low loads and create more pollution.

Resources are available

Seminars - Free seminars are being offered this fall for those interested in learning how to burn safely and efficiently to save money. See box at right for locations and dates.

Brochures, DVDs - A variety of materials have been developed to assist wood burners comply with state and local wood smoke regulations. For a free copy of the DVD, call 477-4727.

Free wood moisture check - If you aren't sure your wood is properly seasoned, call us to schedule a time to bring in a piece of your firewood that we'll check with a moisture meter. Moisture content of seasoned wood should be 20% or less. Another good way to tell is to bang two piece of wood together—you should hear a solid, loud “crack” sound, not a “thud.” Call 477-4727, ext. 115.

Attend a free
***Burn it Smart
Burn it Safe***

Saturday Seminar
11 a.m. - Noon

October 23
Fireplace Center
8119 N. Division
487-5058

October 30
Spokane Chimney
1221 N. Freya Way
244-6639

November 6
(2 locations)

Falco's
9310 E. Sprague
926-8911

Spokane Fireplace
& Patio
W. 27 Boone
326-7388

November 13
Spokane Chimney
1221 N. Freya Way
244-6639

Local experts will provide hands-on demonstrations on safe and efficient burning techniques to help stretch your heating dollars. One lucky winner at each seminar will receive a door prize that includes a wood moisture meter and a box of lightning nuggets.

◆ AIR QUALITY CALENDAR ◆

- Oct. 16 Spokane Clean Air will be at the Fall Leaf Festival at Finch Arboretum, sponsored by the City of Spokane Parks and Recreation Department. A composting fair will be held during the event.
- Oct. 23, 30, Nov. 6, 13 *Burn it Smart, Burn it Safe* Saturday Seminars. See article inside for details.
- Nov. 4 Board of Directors meeting, 9:30 a.m, Spokane Clean Air's office, 3104 E. Augusta Avenue. Monthly meeting agendas are available online at www.spokanecleanair.org.
- Dec. 2 Board of Directors meeting, see listing above for details.

On the Air is a publication of the Spokane Regional Clean Air Agency. Its purpose is to inform local residents on all aspects of outdoor air pollution. Please contact Lisa Woodard, *Editor*, with comments or story ideas:

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Burning Information:
(509) 477-4710

Air Quality Index:
(509) 477-2571

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Ed "Chuck" Crockett, Small Cities and Towns Representative

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- ✓ Daily Air Quality
- ✓ Wood Burning Bans
- ✓ *On the Air* Newsletters
- ✓ Regulations Updates
- ✓ News Releases

Sign up at www.spokanecleanair.org

This newsletter is also available electronically at www.spokanecleanair.org

Compliance Inspections

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- ▲ review records of product usage and hours of equipment operation
- ▲ review other operating parameters, operating procedures, and equipment maintenance logs
- ▲ discuss any planned modifications to facility processes and/or equipment (*Spokane Clean Air must be notified prior to any modifications of processes or equipment and these modifications must be approved by Spokane Clean Air prior to installation and operation.*)
- ▲ discuss any concerns or questions that the facility operator may have

Soon after the inspection, the facility operator will be informed of the facility's compliance status and any corrective actions that may be required.

If a violation is documented, a Notice of Violation may be issued and the facility may be subject to monetary penalties.

With approximately 650 facilities registered with Spokane Clean Air, on-site compliance inspections are an important air quality management tool.

For more information, please visit www.spokanecleanair.org.