

Breathe Easy...

Home heating & outdoor burning

New rules for home heating

Air pollution is a problem in both Invercargill and Gore during winter. At times it reaches alert levels, which means the level of small particles (PM_{10}) exceeds the national standards designed to protect human health. The Government has developed the health-inspired National Environmental Standards for Air Quality (NES) and Environment Southland introduced new rules in the *Proposed Regional Air Plan 2014* to address the region's air quality issues.

WHAT DO THE RULES MEAN FOR YOU?

If you live in the **Invercargill** or **Gore** airsheds, any new burner installed must comply with the NES. You will be able to continue to use your existing open fire or non-compliant burner until the dates listed here.



Do I live in an airshed?

▶ If you live in the Invercargill or Gore areas give us a call to find out or visit the Breathe Easy Southland website.

BURNER RESTRICTIONS FOR THE INVERCARGILL AND GORE AIRSHEDS

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| Open fires | Invercargill and Gore – You can use your open fire to burn wood only until 1 January 2017. After this date all open fires in the Invercargill and Gore airsheds are prohibited . |
| Burner installed before 1 January 1997 | Invercargill – You may use your burner until 1 January 2019, however you must burn only wood from 1 January 2017. Gore – You may use your burner until 1 January 2020, however you must burn only wood from 1 January 2017. |
| Burner installed 1 January 1997 – 1 January 2001 | Invercargill and Gore – You may use your burner until 1 January 2022. |
| Burner installed 1 January 2001 – 1 September 2005 | Invercargill and Gore – You may use your burner until 1 January 2025. |
| Burner installed 1 September 2005 – 1 January 2010* | Invercargill and Gore – You may use your burner until 1 January 2030. |
| Burner installed 1 January 2010 – 6 September 2014* | Invercargill and Gore – You may use your burner until 1 January 2034. |

* If your wood burner was installed after September 2005 it may be on the Ministry for the Environment's list of approved wood burners and not require replacement.

▶ Find out when your burner was installed by contacting Invercargill City Council or Gore District Council's building consents' departments.



Compliant burners

▶ To be listed as a compliant burner, a wood burner must have been tested and found to meet the National Environmental Standards for Air Quality at the date of testing.

The Ministry for the Environment has a list of compliant burners on their website. This list is quite extensive and incorporates burners of differing sizes, both inbuilt (insert) and freestanding. New burners are regularly being added to the list.

Pellet burners that have been tested and found to meet the NES for Air Quality standards for wood burners are also listed.

Visit the website for a list of approved burners – www.mfe.govt.nz/air/home-heating-and-authorised-wood-burners/burners

Note: There are currently no NES compliant multi-fuel or coal burners.

SMALL SCALE SOLID FUEL BOILERS

Existing small scale solid fuel boilers lawfully installed before 6 September 2014 can be used until 2034, when they will become prohibited if they do not meet the necessary emission test requirements. All new boilers lawfully installed after 6 September 2014 are required to meet the emission standards in the Regional Air Plan.

SOLID FUEL COOKING STOVES

You can continue to use your solid fuel cooking stove until 1 January 2022 to burn wood and coal. After that date you can continue to use it burning wood only.

A solid fuel cooking stove is defined as a solid fuelled cooking appliance containing an oven of not less than 20 litre capacity and a hot plate. A solid fuel cooking stove does not include a pot belly, chip heater or a wood burner.







Can I burn it?

As a community we need to take responsibility for what we burn. Burning things such as chemically treated timber, plastics and wet wood produces harmful smoke that contributes to poor air quality and can be toxic.

HOME HEATING

You can't burn (anywhere in Southland):





-  Wet wood (more than 25% moisture content)
-  Chemically treated timber, such as fence posts and some building materials
-  Painted and varnished timber
-  Synthetics including plastics

Burning used oil in home heating appliances in the Invercargill and Gore airsheds is prohibited. Outside the airsheds, a resource consent is required – contact our consents team for more information.

OUTDOOR BURNING

You can only burn outdoors in the Invercargill and Gore airsheds from 1 September to 30 April. Leisure activities such as barbecues, braziers, hangi, fireworks are exempt from this rule.

You can't burn (anywhere in Southland):

-  Chemically treated timber, such as fence posts and some building materials
-  Painted and varnished timber
-  Synthetics including plastics
-  Used oil

Not sure if you can burn it?

▶ Download a detailed list of prohibited fuels for home heating and outdoor burning from the Breathe Easy Southland website.

What can you do to improve air quality?

As well as following the rules in the *Proposed Regional Air Plan 2014*, changing the way you use your fire can help make a difference to our air quality.

Simple steps can have a positive impact, such as:

- ▶ Burning only dry wood with a moisture content of less than 25%.
- ▶ Burning your fire hot and bright.
- ▶ Allowing your fire to burn out overnight rather than dampening it down. Smouldering fires create more smoke.
- ▶ Having your chimney cleaned regularly.

Making the change to cleaner heating

We understand that making changes is not always easy. While thinking about heating options for your home, be sure to keep warm so you don't replace one health risk (air pollution) with another (cold conditions).



Want to know more?

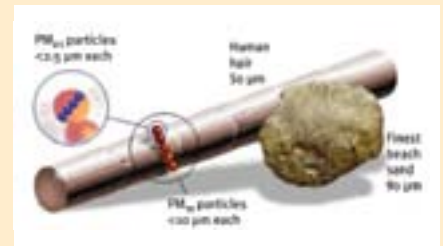
- ▶ For more great tips on reducing the smoke your fire produces, visit the Breathe Easy Southland website.



Burning wood which has less than 25% moisture content is more efficient and reduces the smoke from your chimney. A moisture meter can be a good way to check if your wood is ready to burn. Meters can be purchased for a relatively low cost or a limited number are available to borrow from the Invercargill Environment Centre.

WHAT IS PM₁₀?

PM₁₀ is fine particulate matter smaller than 10 micrometres (10µm) in diameter. PM₁₀ is formed through the combustion of fuels (burning), atmospheric reactions and mechanical processes including crushing, grinding and abrasion.



HOME FIRES LEADING CAUSE OF PM₁₀

By far the biggest contributor of PM₁₀ in the Invercargill and Gore airsheds is the smoke that comes out of home chimneys.

HOW DOES PM₁₀ AFFECT OUR HEALTH?

Breathing in PM₁₀ is harmful to human health. Healthy people experience mainly nuisance health effects but children, asthmatics and people with other respiratory problems can experience serious health problems. Increases in mortality and other health effects are associated with increases in the 24-hour average PM₁₀ concentrations.

National air quality standards

- ▶ The Government has set the National Environmental Standards for Air Quality (NES) to provide a guaranteed level of health protection for all New Zealanders.
- ▶ Regional councils are legally required to take measures to meet the NES. Environment Southland's air plan review is in response to this requirement.
- ▶ The NES set a standard for the pollutant PM₁₀ which is highly concentrated in smoke. The standard is exceeded when more than 50 micrograms of PM₁₀ is measured as a 24-hour average.
- ▶ The NES allows for only one exceedance of the PM₁₀ standard a year. Invercargill usually has more than 10 exceedances each year and Gore less than 10, which is why Gore has more time before the oldest burners are prohibited.

More information

- ▶ For more information, including full details of the *Proposed Regional Air Plan 2014*, visit the Breathe Easy Southland website.

BreatheEasySouthland.co.nz



Clean Air Loans Invercargill

Environment Southland and Invercargill City Council have allocated \$500,000 each per year for the next three years towards a low interest loans scheme, which will help people change to cleaner heating options. This scheme is administered by the Southland Warm Homes Trust.

A low interest loan is available to homeowners within the Invercargill airshed who want to upgrade to approved heating, including approved burners or heat pumps.

The ratepayer pays back the loan over a five-year period at a 3.95% interest rate.

The team at Awarua Synergy (as service providers for Southland Warm Homes Trust) can talk you through the process and also assess what is needed for your home. Talk to them now to see how they can help.

0800 WARMSOUTH (0800 927 676)



**CALL
0800
WARM
SOUTH**