

EPA to Limit Woodstoves' Emissions-by John Myers, January 16th, 2014, Duluth News Tribune

The smell of wood smoke wafting on a cold winter's night may be a hallmark of life in many places, but the federal government says it also may be a health hazard.

The Environmental Protection Agency has moved to reduce pollution from new woodstoves, wood boilers and pellet stoves used for heating purposes starting in 2015.

The new nationwide rules would not affect fireplaces or wood burners already in people's homes and businesses. Restrictions would limit the sale of new wood burners to those that emit about 80 percent less pollution than old models, which can dirty the environment with particulate matter, carbon monoxide and organic compounds.

The new rules, in the works for more than two years, also do not apply to campground or backyard fire pits or wood-fired barbecues. Soot linked to early deaths

Particle pollution, or soot, is linked to a range of serious health effects, including heart attacks, strokes and asthma attacks. Several studies have linked wood smoke to premature death among people who suffer from heart and lung disease.

Many wood furnaces and stoves burn inefficiently, sending a lot of smoke, creosote and soot up the chimney. That particulate matter builds up to cause smog.

"Smoke from residential woodstoves and heaters is a significant source of harmful, fine-particle pollution in many areas of the country," said Janet McCabe, acting assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Air and Radiation.

She said that by reducing air pollution associated with asthma attacks, heart attacks and strokes, the new rules will save Americans up to \$2.4 billion a year in health care costs.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration estimates 11.5 million U.S. homes heat with wood. Those types of systems are popular in the northern states. The EPA says about 85,700 wood-burning heating devices will be made and sold annually by 2015.

For woodstoves, the new rules would require a maximum of 4.5 grams per hour of pollution in 2015 and reducing that to 1.5 grams per hour by 2020.

'Serious changes' required

Daryl Lamppa, president of Lamppa Manufacturing stove works in Tower, Minn., has been making high-efficiency wood-burning stoves for years. His design already meets the new federal standards. In tests conducted by an EPA-certified independent lab in Wisconsin in 2011, his stoves produced less than 1 gram of particulates per hour – and in some tests, as low as 0.45 grams.

"We're already there," Lamppa said. "This is good news for us. But there are a lot of stoves on the market out there (whose manufacturers) are going to have to make some serious changes ... or get out of the business."