

# New Federal US EPA Regulations affecting Wood Pellet Manufacturers

## Summary

On February 3, 2015, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) signed the updated federal regulation 40 CFR Part 60, Subpart AAA, *Standards of Performance for New Residential Wood Heaters*, and the new federal regulation 40 CFR Part 60, Subpart QQQQ, *Standards of Performance for New Hydronic Heaters and Forced-Air Furnaces*, expanding the regulatory coverage of wood burning appliances.

## The rule Includes:

- The rules contain obligations specific to the following:
  - ⇒ manufacturers of wood heaters,
  - ⇒ quality of wood pellets used as fuel,
  - ⇒ sellers of all types of regulated wood heaters, and
  - ⇒ owners and operators of wood heaters;
- Emissions standards;
- Certification test methods and process; and
- Requirements for manufacturers to test and report the efficiency and carbon monoxide emissions from tested units.

Pellet burning appliances can only be tested for certification using pellets graded under a licensing agreement with a third-party organization. The following is a listing of approved organizations that meet the specification in the regulations:

- PFI
- ENplus
- CANplus



## Important Compliance Dates

**After December 31, 2015**, retailers of wood stoves **may not** sell any wood stoves or pellet stoves that do not meet the regulatory requirements.

### Key Changes:

1. Compliant Wood Burners
2. Compliant Labels
3. Compliant Fuels
4. Compliant Owner's Manuals and other Point-of Sale Materials
5. Compliant Operation of Wood Burners

**Starting January 1, 2016**, Owners and operators of new, certified wood-fired heaters are required to utilize proper burn practices for units subject to these regulations; operate each heater in a manner consistent with the owner's manual; **use only** wood chips and pellet fuels that are specified in the owner's manual; pellets must be graded under a licensing agreement with a third-party organization approved by the EPA, and not burn prohibited fuels.

Manufacturers are required to **void the warranties** in cases of improper operation, including burning of improper fuel.



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## Important Facts Involving Wood Pellet Manufacturers

Wood pellets used as fuel by operators of new, certified room or central wood pellet heaters, as well as those used for certification testing, must meet the following minimum requirements as assured through a quality assurance program licensed by a third-party organization approved by the EPA:

1. **Density:** minimum density of 38 lb/ft<sup>3</sup>;
2. **Dimensions:** maximum length of 1.5 inches and diameter 0.230 - 0.285 inches;
3. **Inorganic fines:** less than or equal to 1%;
4. **Chlorides:** less than or equal to 300 parts per million by weight;
5. **Ash content:** no more than 2%;
6. Contains no demolition or construction waste;
7. **Trace metals:** less than 100 mg/kg; and
8. **Does not contain prohibited fuels:**
  - Lawn clippings or yard waste;
  - Residential or commercial garbage;
  - Materials containing rubber, including tires;
  - Materials containing plastic;
  - Waste petroleum products;
  - Paints or paint thinners;
  - Asphalt products;
  - Materials containing asbestos;
  - Construction or demolition debris;
  - Paper products, cardboard, plywood, or particleboard; \*
  - Railroad ties, pressure-treated wood, or pallets;
  - Manure or animal remains;
  - Salt water driftwood or other previously salt water saturated materials;
  - Unseasoned wood;
  - Any materials that are not included in the warranty and owner's manual for the subject wood heater; or
  - Any materials that were not included in the certification tests for the subject wood heater.

\* The prohibition against burning these materials does not prohibit the use of fire starters made from paper, cardboard, sawdust, wax, and similar substances for the purpose of starting a fire in an affected wood heater.

## Regulation and Summary Documents

The regulation and summary documents can be accessed on-line at <http://www2.epa.gov/residential-wood-heaters/final-new-source-performance-standards-residential-wood-heaters>.

## Enforcement of Regulation

Although states may take delegation of parts of this regulation, Vermont has not done so at this time. Because this is a federal law, the US EPA is the enforcing agency for this regulation.

The notice of final rulemaking was signed by EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy on February 3, 2015. The regulation became effective on May 15, 2015.

## These rules DO NOT regulate:

- Heaters fueled solely by gas, oil, or coal.
- **Existing** wood heaters that are already in use in or at people's homes.
- Fireplaces, cook stoves, camp stoves, and Native American bake ovens, all as defined in the regulations.

## Assistance

For more information on the requirements of these federal standards, please contact:

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