

New Federal US EPA Regulations for Residential Wood and Pellet Stoves

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*, expanding the regulatory coverage of wood burning appliances.

The rule affects:

- Single burn-rate and adjustable burn-rate woodstoves,
- Wood-fired fireplace inserts and
- Wood pellet stoves

The rule includes:

- Requirements for
 - ⇒ 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 process and test methods;
- Efficiency testing and reporting requirements; and
- Carbon monoxide emission testing and reporting requirements.

Key Changes:

1. Wood Burners Emission Limits
2. Permanent Labeling Requirements
3. Specific Fuel Requirements
4. Owner's Manuals Requirements and other Point-of Sale Materials
5. Procedures for Operation of Wood Burners

Important Compliance Dates and Facts

Starting January 1, 2016, *only* those wood stoves and pellet stoves that comply with the requirements of this regulation can legally be sold in the U.S. They must meet the Step 1 Particulate Matter Emission limit of 4.5 grams per hour of operation (as determined by a laboratory test procedure).



Owners and operators must:

- Use 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 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.

The rule requires manufacturers to *void the warranties* in cases of improper operation, including burning of improper fuel.

Starting May 15, 2020, *only* those wood stoves and pellet stoves that comply with the requirements of this regulation can legally be sold in the U.S. They must meet Step 2 Particulate Matter Emission Limits:

- 2.0 grams per hour for all wood stoves, if tested using crib wood (dimensional lumber)
- Alternative limit: 2.5 grams per hour, if tested with cord wood; method must be approved.



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Prohibited Fuels

- Residential or commercial garbage;
- Lawn clippings or yard waste;
- 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 (greater than 20% moisture content);
- 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 regulation does not prohibit the use of fire starters made from paper, cardboard, sawdust, wax, and similar substances in an affected wood heater.

These rules DO NOT regulate:

- Heaters fueled solely by a non-wood fuel such as gas, oil, or coal.
- Wood heaters or other wood-burning appliances that are already in use in people's homes.
- Fireplaces, cook stoves, camp stoves, and Native American bake ovens, all as defined in the regulations.

Regulation and Summary Documents

The regulation and summary documents are available on-line at <http://www2.epa.gov/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.

Homeowner Assistance

Learn more about the importance of burning the right wood, the right way, in the right wood burning appliance to protect your home, health, and the air we breathe at: <http://www.epa.gov/burnwise/>

Assistance

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

John Wakefield - Compliance Chief
Air Quality & Climate Division
Phone: 802-279-5674
Email: john.wakefield@vermont.gov