

# **The Wood Smoke Activist Network**

**August 2011 Newsletter**

**Educating the world about the health and climate impacts of  
wood smoke and combustion aerosols.**

**Editor: Shirley Brandie**

**1/8/2011**

# *The Wood Smoke Activist Network*

## WOOD SMOKE ISSUES

Volume 3, Issue 8  
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Editor: [Shirley Brandie](#)  
Co-Editor: [Julie Mellum](#)

### *Fighting Wood Smoke Pollution from the Grassroots to Government Level*

#### **Welcome!**

We hope that this newsletter will give you the information and inspiration you need. Regain clean air to breathe and eliminate the wood burning that is affecting your health and your home environment.

Please pass this issue on to others in need of help and suggest that they send an email to [s.brandie@hotmail.com](mailto:s.brandie@hotmail.com) to be added to the mailing list.

#### **Mission Statement**

Our mission is to educate public officials, government and all citizens about wood smoke as a major form of hazardous air pollution that affects our health, use of our property, water, crops, livestock, the environment and climate change. We urge citizens everywhere to press for legislative changes to call wood smoke a public nuisance under state health codes and to ban all wood burning.”



Please note that there will be no September newsletter.

Most of you know that we obtained a temporary court injunction in May of 2005. After many delays we are finally going to get our case to trial.

This trial is for the permanent injunction and costs for repairs to our home.

This is an important time for not only us but for all of you who are living the nightmare that we lived.

It is a time that needs to be spent totally on the court case.

As soon as the judge issues his decision, which might be a couple of weeks after trial, I will send out an email to all of you.

Take care and enjoy the rest of your summer.....

*Shirley*

## LONG-AWAITED OPPORTUNITY!!!

### A “MUST DO” OPPORTUNITY!

This is a chance we've been waiting for. The EPA has opened a site to share wood smoke information and thoughts: <http://blog.epa.gov/woodsmoke/>. They acknowledge that wood smoke issues are increasing and invite us to suggest ways to reduce wood smoke. Even though it discusses EPA Certified Wood Stoves and the “Burn Smart” program, this is a chance for us to make a strong statement against wood burning of any kind because all burning creates hazardous pollution. EPA certified units will result in more smoke if people buy them who haven't burned before. They are indeed the “Camel Lights” of the wood burning industry.

1. Please click [HERE](#) and scroll down to where you can add comments at the bottom.
2. Keep your comments brief, so they will be read.
3. Send this site to everyone you're working with on wood smoke issues, urging them to send their thoughts too—specifically, “Please do not promote EPA certified wood stoves or any other burning, because all burning causes serious pollution.”

## Another great opportunity!

According to [David Suzuki's web site](#), they “work with government, business **and individuals** to conserve our environment by providing science-based education, advocacy and policy work, and acting as a catalyst for the social change that today's situation demands.”

This would be a good time for each of us to [email](#) and question why nothing has been done to help those of us that are suffering from residential wood smoke.

I think it is important that you describe the conditions that you are forced to live with and how wood smoke has affected your health, the health of your family and the restrictions that wood smoke has put on your life.

Please be sure to let him know what you have done to try to get help and that your pleas have fallen on deaf ears.

If we can get each and every one of you to email to him we have an excellent chance now to be heard. Remember: the loudest wheel gets oiled first!

PLEASE make this effort for all of us!



## Sparks are flying over fire pits

While the summer like temperatures heat up and fireflies flit about in backyards, we also see the destructive sparks and smoke from woodburning fire pits, fire rings, fire bowls, chimineas, outdoor fireplaces and backyard bonfires permeating the neighbourhood air.

Acrid, toxic woodsmokefilled air invades and assaults the lungs, home and property of urban residents who do not want woodsmoke destroying their health, quality of life and harming the environment.

Woodburning barbecues, wood food smokers, woodburning ovens and all outdoor open air burning has a negative impact on the very young, those with compromised immune systems, and the fragile elderly. Breathing fine particulate matter (PM 2.5) goes deeply into the lungs causing irreparable damage. Cancer, asthma, stroke, cardiovascular, COPD, cardiopulmonary, respiratory and other diseases are associated with woodsmoke.

When summer heats up, we enjoy being outside, but city residents are being denied the right to breathe healthy air woodsmoke-free, enjoy their property, yard and deck, all due to residential open air burning and community leaders that condone, enable and support woodburning.

Woodburning is not green, clean or healthy in any environment.

Woodsmoke from all woodburning devices can be an immediate threat to health, or have long-term effects. Woodsmoke's toxic cancer-causing chemicals are worse for our health than tobacco smoke. Tobacco smoke is a public health issue and has been banned almost everywhere. Awareness of the grave danger of second hand and thirdhand tobacco smoke has prompted community leaders in many cities throughout our nation to ban the use of tobacco in many outdoor venues such as walking/hiking trails, parks, play grounds for children, swimming areas and outdoor sports fields. This wise pro-active action protects the health and safety of everyone. Yet woodsmoke from outdoor open air burning devices pose an even greater threat to our immediate health than tobacco smoke.

Woodsmoke is a public health issue that must be addressed in every Canadian municipality.

Sparks and destructive woodsmoke will continue to fly and burn unless you take pro-active action to say No to Woodburning in your community.

Remind the elected leaders in your city that woodsmoke is a public and private nuisance. Demand that bylaws be adopted to prohibit all outdoor open air burning. Speak up for your right to breathe healthy air -- woodsmokefree.

Linda Baker Beaudin Cornwall

## Open burn ban issued in London, Ontario Canada

### Excerpt:

This ban, starting Saturday, will continue until further notice from the Ministry of Natural Resources.

"People think they can ignore the ban, but they should take it very seriously.... There will be no ifs, ands or buts with this ban," Carew warned.

<http://www.lfpress.com/news/london/2011/07/16/18430051.html>

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This would be a great opportunity to express your opinions on wood burning! Letters to the editor can be sent here:

<http://www.lfpress.com/comment/letters/>

*Shirley*

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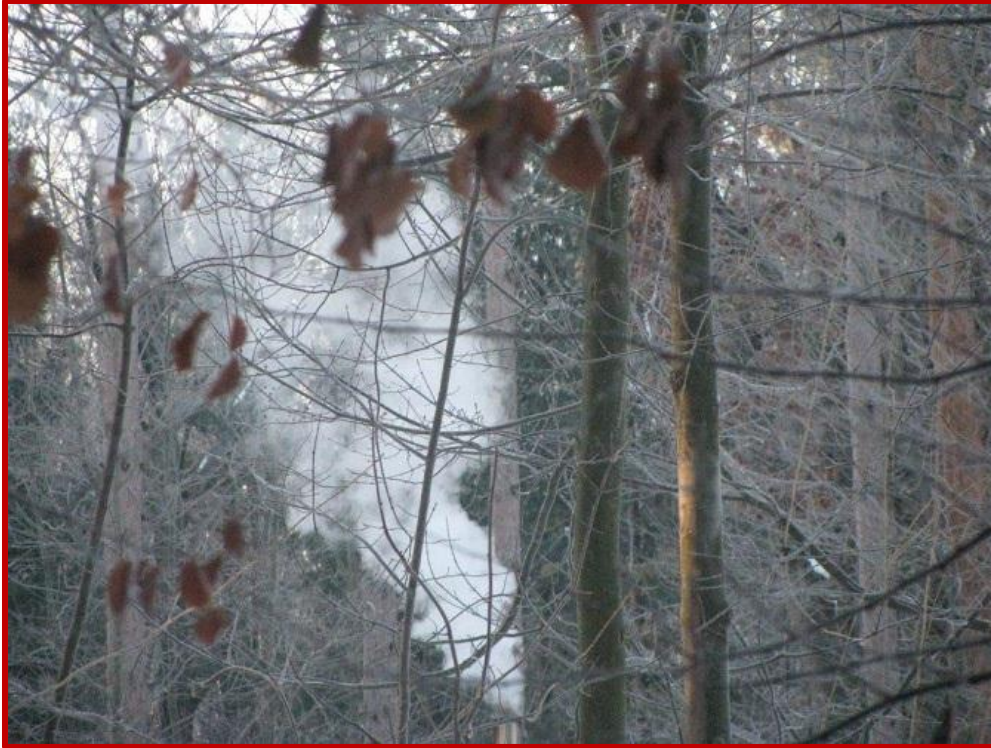
## How an OWB became an IWB

As incredible as it seems, there are people that will go to any extent to continue to burn and pollute all around them as demonstrated by this fellow in Byron, Michigan.

After conceding to an order, the fellow built a garage around the OWB, therefore successfully turning into an IWB that produces the same copious amount of smoke!

Shame on the municipality that allows the same amount of smoke to be released as long as the appliance is hidden. There are, believe it or not, two chimneys going at this residence!





There are people that thought a shut-down order would finally end the nightmare but, instead, they are now faced with double the smoke from a neighbor with his back up and the unrelenting smoke that has caused great distress as witnessed below:





It is high time that municipalities protect their residents from wood smoke and not leave it to the victims of the smoke to pursue lengthy and expensive legal action.

A municipality should be taking the health of their residents seriously and take action to create or amend a bylaw to end this very dangerous smoke invasion.

## **Newsworthy Links**

**June 19, 2011** - [One person's back-yard burn is others' bane....](#)

**Excerpt:** It's a beautiful summer evening. I'm enjoying dinner on our front porch when suddenly the wind shifts, and I smell smoke.

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**June 27, 2011** – [Lawmakers should defy....](#)

**Excerpt:** Governors and legislators take oaths to protect life, health, safety and welfare and obey the laws.

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**May 16, 2011** - [The chemical, isocyanic acid, is similar to methyl isocyanate — the gas that leaked from a pesticide plant in Bhopal, India, in 1984 killing more than 3,000 people within weeks.....](#)

**Excerpt:** In the human body, isocyanic acid dissolves to form cyanate ions and the researchers found that the acid was very soluble at the pH level of human blood. This means it could potentially enter the bloodstream, de Gouw said.

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**July 03, 2011** - You must take action NOW if you want to survive and end the horrors of woodsmoke emissions (PM2.5), If you do nothing, you and your family will become even more ill, and die prematurely. Now is the time for you to end woodsmoke..... [please click here for some excellent suggestions.](#)

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**July 03, 2011** - Timothy Lethbridge [blogspot](#) has an article on the growing problem of wood smoke in many Canadian communities.

## Dan Stih

Certified Microbial Consultant (CMC)  
Certified Indoor Environmental  
Consultant (CIEC)  
President, [Healthy Living Spaces](#) LLC



**Our homes and offices may be clean, but are they safe? Armed with aerosol sprays and bleach, we wage war against germs and household dirt, but at what cost?**

Dan has written a book, "Healthy Living Spaces", filled with information, which can be [purchased online](#).

### **Excerpt:**

The smoke and the dust from wildfires is unhealthy to breathe. The effects of smoke range from eye and respiratory tract irritation to more serious disorders, including reduced lung function, bronchitis, exacerbation of asthma, and premature death. Studies have found that fine particles are linked with increased mortality and aggravation of pre-existing respiratory and cardiovascular disease (Wildfire Smoke a Guide for Public Health Officials, Revised July 2008).

Contact Dan at: [dan@healthylivingspaces.com](mailto:dan@healthylivingspaces.com)

## **Indoor Wood Smoke Pollution** *A Review of Historical and Current Concerns*

**Alan Smith**

Historical records relating to the health impact of air pollution are valuable because in simpler times, before the automobile and big polluting industries, residential wood and later coal burning was the only significant source of pollution. As early as the 13<sup>th</sup> century it was recognized that urban smoke could cause the diseases that today we associate with cigarette smoking. However it was not until the 17<sup>th</sup> century that indoor air pollution was recognized as being distinct from outdoor air pollution.

In the days when everything in a home was natural—from the building materials and the furniture to the cleaning products it may be difficult to believe that there could be a problem. However, John Evelyn, writing in 1661, explains that it is the fumes from a fireplace that are causing families, that spend time by the fire, to develop respiratory diseases.

He also noted that Towne smoake, as he puts it, causes lung cancer and respiratory problems and remarkably realized that the combined effect of living in a smoky area and spending time by the fire resulted in a marked reduction in life expectancy.

Today “healthy” homes are being built, at considerable expense, using natural materials that do not outgas dangerous chemicals, then negating the health benefits by installing the most significant source of dangerous chemicals in a home – a wood burning stove or fireplace. Remarkably, one of the selling features of today’s wood burning appliances is that they give a home that traditional smell of stale smoke and powerful carcinogens. It is no surprise that some people like the smell of wood smoke as several of the powerful carcinogens, such as benzene and the polycyclic compounds belong to what is aptly called the aromatic family of chemicals. Aromatic compounds are only one of the concerns – fine particulates, mutagens, co-carcinogens and a range of poisonous compounds can also be identified. Adding to the health implications are free radicals which are not identified by routine chemical analysis. Free radicals are highly reactive and damage DNA and any body tissue they contact.

An alternative to using chemical analysis to identify the health implications of sharing a home with a wood burning stove or fireplace is to monitor the incidence of respiratory problems among children. In the U.S., for example two thirds of the children who share a home with a wood stove have respiratory problems that can be related to exposure to wood combustion products. However, as with chemical analysis, this technique fails to identify the full implications of exposing children to smoke. British researchers find that children exposed to smoke before the age of four may experience no ill effects at the time but develop respiratory problems later in life. The Canadian Lung Association explains that exposure to smoke impairs the development of children’s lungs.

Some of our understanding of the health impact of sharing a home with a wood burning appliance is based on studies from the developing countries where indoor smoke concentrations are higher than in homes in North America, with perhaps the exception of homes with wood burning cook stoves. However, studies from the developing world are valuable as the health implications are more clearly defined and the findings can be extrapolated to the situation in North America.

It is commendable that Bill and Hillary Clinton are addressing the indoor wood smoke issue in the developing countries but it would be even more commendable if they would address concerns in North America.

No safe level of wood smoke can be found and in Ireland, for example, local health units are concerned about the effect of the weekly exposure of children to smoke which is part of church rituals. The smoke wafted around is from smouldering herbs, not wood. However, the smoke from any cellulose based material, whether wood, tobacco or herbs has a similar chemical composition and similar health implications.

The British also recognize that even a few minutes exposure to wood smoke can be harmful and many cities have mandated the use of smokeless firelighters rather than paper and sticks to light their smokeless fireplace fuels.

It may be too late to identify some of the health implications of sharing a home with a wood burning appliance as, in Canada and the U.S., whole towns and cities are now blanketed with wood smoke and ambient smoke readily enters homes even with the windows closed. Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (crib death) is a concern as babies are very sensitive to pollutants. In addition, wood burning stoves, in particular, tend to overheat a home, particularly at night and overheated babies can die. In Christchurch, New Zealand, an increase in crib deaths to one baby in 160 seems to correlate with increased wood burning.

Another concern is the possibility that exposure to the fumes from a stove or fireplace during pregnancy may be responsible for babies being born with birth defects. It is a given, that spending time by the fire exposed to mutagens and free radicals poses some risk but it in today's smoke - polluted world additional exposure could be from a neighbour's chimney, backyard fire pit, a visit to a city park or a camping trip. Again going back to simpler times for possible answers. Two hundred years ago a Mr. White noted that there are a number of health issues among babies born to mothers who have a fondness for gin or who live in a smoky area. It is not conclusive but significant enough to justify warning expectant mothers of a possible threat.

As with cigarette smoking, the full extent of the health implications of breathing wood smoke will never be known. However it is very troubling that the public has not been told of the known health consequences of breathing wood smoke even though the health implications have been known for centuries.



## Protect your family from the health effects of smoke

### Smoke is a respiratory irritant!

While health officials are starting to urge protection against wildfire smoke, we have the equivalent of wildfires every night and day in our residential neighborhoods—we need protection too, because recreational wood burning is more prevalent, and just as destructive, as wildfires. It is also ruining our health and the ability to use and enjoy our property.

We must remind our city governments that wood smoke presents a “physical barrier” to the use and enjoyment of public spaces like city streets, parks and sidewalks, according to the Americans with Disabilities (ADD) guidelines.

### Symptoms:

- Burning eyes
- Nasal irritation which sometimes can lead to bleeding or nasal ulcers
- Sore or scratchy throat
- Aggravation of asthma and other lung conditions
- Some people experience dizziness or nausea when exposed to smoke
- Some have experienced a tightness in their chest or chest pains which often leads to a hospital visit

### Suggestions:

- Keep an eye on your local air quality reports through news coverage or online.
- If you see smoke, avoid outdoor activities. It is especially dangerous for children and people with existing medical conditions.
- If there are burning bylaws in your area, call to report the burning to have it ended.
- Run your air conditioner with the fresh air intake closed so as not to bring in the smoke from outdoors.
- Stay indoors if at all possible with your windows closed.
- Be sure to take any medications that your doctor has prescribed for existing medical conditions and call your doctor if your symptoms continue.
- Do not add to the pollution that gets into your house by smoking, using your fireplace (gas or wood) and do not vacuum as that stirs up the particles that have got inside your home.

## **JOIN OUR NEW NETWORK!**

**Our cause has gained great momentum, with more people joining the anti-wood smoke efforts weekly. Our focus now is to help everyone connect with others near us nation-wide in the US and Canada. We must unite in pressuring our municipalities and governments toward wood smoke regulations as soon as possible.**

**Therefore, I am looking for **Volunteer Wood Smoke Coordinators** in EVERY STATE & PROVINCE to field and manage wood smoke complaints and issues in their own state or province.**

**The goal is to share information nation-wide and to focus on wood smoke regulation.**

**I think it's safe to say that anyone reading this newsletter probably has issues with wood smoke.**

**If you are willing to give your name and email address so we can form a visible network please email [Shirley](#) or [Julie](#).**

**Perhaps you would be willing to help with letter writing, flyer passing, etc. No money is required, just a willingness to be someone others can contact for support or more involvement.**

**Contact Julie at [info@takebacktheair.com](mailto:info@takebacktheair.com) if you would like your name to appear on our state/province-wide contacts page or if you'd like to become your state or province's "representative" to coordinate contacts within your state or province. Contact Julie, also, if you'd like to learn who else is fighting wood smoke in your area and if you want concrete suggestions on how to get results.**

## Network Representative List

**(Blank lines are yet to be filled)**

Alberta	<a href="mailto:cleanairmattersinalberta@gmail.com">cleanairmattersinalberta@gmail.com</a>	Cathy
BC	<a href="mailto:vmorell@telus.net">vmorell@telus.net</a>	Vicki
Manitoba		
New Brunswick		
Newfoundland		
Nova Scotia		
Ontario	<a href="mailto:s.brandie@hotmail.com">s.brandie@hotmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:lewp@sent.com">lewp@sent.com</a>	Shirley Alexa
Prince Edward Island		
Quebec	<a href="mailto:giulia.dalesio@hotmail.com">giulia.dalesio@hotmail.com</a>	Giulia
Saskatchewan		
Alabama		
Alaska		
Arizona		
Arkansas		
California	<a href="mailto:dervissdesign@verizon.net">dervissdesign@verizon.net</a>	Michelle
Colorado	<a href="mailto:ithomsen@yahoo.com">ithomsen@yahoo.com</a>	Ian
Connecticut		
Delaware		
Florida	<a href="mailto:sfmada@aol.com">sfmada@aol.com</a>	Sherri
Georgia		
Hawaii	<a href="mailto:admin@mcs-america.org">admin@mcs-america.org</a>	Sal
Idaho		
Illinois	<a href="mailto:dirtyaviston@gmail.com">dirtyaviston@gmail.com</a>	Dirty Aviston
Indiana	<a href="mailto:cleanairlaporte2@gmail.com">cleanairlaporte2@gmail.com</a>	Jim

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Maryland		
Massachusetts	<a href="mailto:s.brandie@hotmail.com">s.brandie@hotmail.com</a>	Shirley
Michigan	<a href="mailto:redNO2sky@freedomofair.info">redNO2sky@freedomofair.info</a>	Tom
Minnesota	<a href="mailto:mellum.julie@gmail.com">mellum.julie@gmail.com</a>	Julie
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Nevada		
New Hampshire	<a href="mailto:gefrich@comcast.net">gefrich@comcast.net</a>	George
New Jersey	<a href="mailto:1bc2r@optonline.net">1bc2r@optonline.net</a>	Diane
New Mexico	<a href="mailto:dan@healthylivingspaces.com">dan@healthylivingspaces.com</a>	Dan
New York	<a href="mailto:bjlich@live.com">bjlich@live.com</a>	Clean Air Rights for Everyone
North Carolina		
North Dakota		
Ohio		
Oklahoma		
Oregon	<a href="mailto:info@takebacktheair.com">info@takebacktheair.com</a>	Julie
Pennsylvania	<a href="mailto:kss52@comcast.net">kss52@comcast.net</a>	Karen
Rhode Island	<a href="mailto:rifca08@yahoo.com">rifca08@yahoo.com</a>	Rhode Island
South		

Carolina		
South Dakota		
Tennessee	<a href="mailto:s.brandie@hotmail.com">s.brandie@hotmail.com</a>	Shirley
Texas		
Utah		
Vermont	<a href="mailto:biomass.greenwash@gmail.com">biomass.greenwash@gmail.com</a>	Josh
Virginia		
Washington	<a href="mailto:NeedCleanAir@Rocketmail.com">NeedCleanAir@Rocketmail.com</a>	L. Kunish
West Virginia		
Wisconsin	<a href="mailto:wkwsan@hotmail.com">wkwsan@hotmail.com</a>	Linda
Wyoming		

## Legal firms that offer help

**\*\*Note to any legal firm that can provide help with residential wood smoke issues and wishes to add their name to this page.\*\***

**Please email Shirley with your state/province, name of firm, who to contact (email address & telephone)**

NOTICE of FLORIDA and KENTUCKY ATTORNEY WILLING TO CONSIDER WOOD SMOKE CASES, perhaps on a contingency.

Attorney **Sherri Myers** is a Florida attorney who is also licensed to practice in Kentucky and in 2 federal courts. She specializes in the rights of persons with disabilities, many of whom may be protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA, the civil rights law that is intended to ensure that citizens with disabilities such as asthma, for example, have “access” to public spaces such as city parks, streets and sidewalks. A federal court in northern Iowa ordered the town of Mallard, Iowa, to disallow wood and leaf burning, because the smoke presented a physical barrier to a small child with severe asthma, making her unable to use city streets and sidewalks.

Sherri is interested in legal issues that impact persons with multiple chemical sensitivity and other environmental illnesses. She also serves on the Pensacola City Council and in that role is working to influence governmental policies on environmental issues. She is the Advocacy Coordinator for the Center for Independent Living Disability Resource Center. Sherri lives in Pensacola, which is located in the panhandle of Florida. Contact her at [sfmada@aol.com](mailto:sfmada@aol.com). Phone: (850) 484-0902


## **Steps to Success...for fighting wood smoke oppression of all kinds**

### ***WOOD SMOKE--Talking Points***

WOOD SMOKE VIOLATES YOUR PROPERTY RIGHTS... to use and enjoy your property smoke-free. This should be your MAIN FOCUS. The smoke shouldn't trespass onto the property of others. This nuisance ordinance precedent is established and to some degree enforced in Elmira, NY. Ask the secretary at this number to please email you a copy of their ordinance, which states that smoke and other noxious and deleterious fumes that pass onto the property of others is punishable by \$250 (for the second offense) or a jail term. It is not online, so you must request a copy. This law has been on the books for many years, as it was in much of New York until new ordinances were written to allow for more recreational wood burning.

PHONE: 607-737-5654 Elmira's city attorney is willing to discuss their law.

1. NEVER GIVE UP!
2. IN PLEADING YOUR CASE, STRESS THAT:  
“WOODSMOKE IS MORE THAN A NUISANCE: IT IS A SEVERE PUBLIC HEALTH HAZARD”. The black carbon soot in wood smoke and vehicle exhaust is A PROVEN CAUSE OF PREMATURE DEATH IN PEOPLE OF ALL AGES from asthma attacks and heart attacks. Kids are the most vulnerable.

3. THERE IS NO SAFE LEVEL OF WOOD SMOKE; it is implicated in asthma attacks and heart attacks. (“Wood stoves may cause cancer, heart disease”, FoxNews.com, Feb. 07, 2011).  
<http://www.foxnews.com/health/2011/02/07/wood-stoves-cause-cancer-heart-disease>
4. Burners are taking your full enjoyment of your property—you must fight for your family’s health and for your property. CONTACT A LAWYER WHO CAN READ THE “COMMON LAW DOCTRINE” ON THE HARMS TEST, which deals with what it would cost you to sell your home at a loss, versus what it would cost the person with the wood burner to heat with something else. *Even if you don’t use an attorney, this is a valuable negotiating tool.*
5. You may have to sell your property at a steep discount, because you would have to disclose the frequent presence of wood smoke as a “material fact” that could affect another buyer’s use and enjoyment of the property. This would limit the buying pool to begin with. If it sells at all, it would possibly sell for maybe 20-30% less than comparable properties that are not impacted by wood smoke. Just like homes near freeways and busy streets historically sell for considerably less due to pollution.
6. Never settle for “raising the smokestack” or “increasing the setback”, or you lose. The smoke’s fine particulates never disappear and whirl around in gusts, always affecting someone else’s property and their health. WOOD SMOKE ALSO DAMAGES CROPS, WATER QUALITY, LIVESTOCK AND WILDLIFE.

7. TAKE A FEW KEY PHOTOS. Keep it simple. Label them and indicate where your property is.
8. PRINT OUT A FACT SHEET ON WOOD SMOKE and give to neighbors and city/town officials. See [www.burningissues.org](http://www.burningissues.org).
9. ALSO PRINT OUT KEY ORDINANCES OF OTHER COMMUNITIES WITH BANS ON WOOD SMOKE. See [www.burningissues.org](http://www.burningissues.org) under LEGAL.
10. ARM YOURSELF WITH A FEW KEY ARTICLES ABOUT WOOD SMOKE. “Air pollutants from fireplaces and wood-burning stoves raise health concerns”, Embargoed for release, Feb. 5, 2011, Washington, Feb. 5, 2011. Excerpted from report by American Chemical Society, “Oxidative Stress, DNA Damage and Inflammation Induced by Ambient Air and Wood Smoke Particulates Matter in Humans”
11. GET A LETTER FROM A DOCTOR, documenting how wood smoke is harming—or will harm—your health. To ensure that your message isn’t diluted, WRITE THE LETTER YOURSELF AND ASK YOUR PHYSICIAN TO SIGN IT-- OR TO PUT IT ON THEIR LETTERHEAD. Share it with your neighbor and city officials. Doctors may be reluctant to get “involved;” they often not aware that wood smoke is hazardous, because they have been trained to prescribe rather than prevent.
12. FIRST TRY TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE YOURSELF, in a friendly but persistent manner. Offering to neighbor for their “HELP” is disarming. Even offer to share the cost or pay for a gas furnace can be less expensive than a lawsuit, or

- waiting for an ordinance change. A court of law wants to know you have tried to resolve these issues on your own.
10. Try taking your burning neighbor to [SMALL CLAIMS COURT](#) While a judge cannot order the appliance removed, they could order the burner to reimburse you for days you couldn't use your property due to the smoke, (indoors and out) or pay your health care costs. Some such cases are being won.
  11. **ALL CITIZENS ARE ENTITLED TO SPEAK AT CITY COUNCIL AND TOWNSHIP MEETINGS** according to law. Gather other supporters if possible and **ASK PUBLIC OFFICIALS TO BAN WOOD BURNING ALTOGETHER**, because they violate your property rights and are a well-documented public health hazard.
  12. **WRITE A SIMPLE LETTER TO YOUR MAYOR and CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS** before and after speaking at a township or council meeting. **ASK FOR THEIR HELP.**
  13. **HAVE A LAWYER WRITE A SIMPLE LETTER TO YOUR NEIGHBOR** or to a township board, asking for resolution. A letter should cost less than \$125, and it convinces others you are serious.
  14. **HIRE AN ATTORNEY WHO HAS EXPERIENCE IN THIS AREA.** COSTS CAN RANGE FROM \$5000 and up, but what is your life worth?

***OTHER TIPS:***

**HOW TO RESPOND TO THE QUESTION, “ARE YOU TRYING TO BAN ALL WOOD BURNING?”** Put the question back on them, acknowledging that it is ultimately their decision. You say, “The science is very clear. There is no safe level of wood smoke. Knowing this, you (councilpersons, etc.) should ask yourself what you want for yourself, for your family and for your community. The answer for us is clear. The people elected you to do the right thing for the community. The right thing is not always the easy thing.”

**SAMPLE NUISANCE ORDINANCE (FROM CLINTON TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN), TO USE AS A MODEL.**

Code of Ordinances

**CHAPTER 676**

Safety, Sanitation and Health

**676.07 AIR POLLUTION.**

(a) No person shall create, cause or maintain any nuisance within the Township by the unreasonable creation of dust, smoke, fly-ash or noxious odors, offensive or disturbing to adjacent property owners and residents of the area.

(b) The determination of whether any activity enumerated in subsection (a) hereof is a public nuisance, and a violation of this section shall be in the absolute discretion of the Superintendent of the Building Department of the Township, subject only to review by the Township Board, upon proper application therefore made by the alleged violator within fourteen days after such determination by the Building Department Superintendent. (Ord. 184. Passed 8-31-64.)

### ***OTHER USEFUL TIPS***

\*Wood smoke trespass violates most nuisance ordinances, but the problem is enforcement. Because a city or county claims not to have the budget to enforce ordinances, you must convince them of the importance of doing so and give them the following ideas:

1) Simply by having a no burning/wood smoke ordinance in place will curtail a lot of burning to begin with. There will be pressure to conform, even without penalties in some cases.

2) Tickets can be issued by the police or Fire Department

3) Propose that “spot checks” can be used to help prevent burning.

\*Pass flyers to neighbors, post in libraries, at your town hall (leave here and there without having to ask permission)—and in coffee shops.

\*Email [info@takebacktheair.com](mailto:info@takebacktheair.com) to connect with others in your state or in the country who are also fighting OWB smoke or recreational burning wood smoke.

CO Level	Action	CO Level	Action
1-4ppm	Normal levels in human tissues produced by body.	50ppm	US OSHA recommended 8 hour maximum workplace exposure Maximum NCI level for Unvented appliances
3-7ppm	6% increase in the rate of admission in hospitals of non-elderly for asthma. (Sheppard-1999)	70ppm	1st Alarm level of UL2034 approved CO Alarms- 2-4 hours 3rd Alarm level for NSI 3000 - 30 seconds NSI 3000 Low Level Monitor cannot be silenced by reset button
5-6ppm	Significant risk of low birth rate if exposed during last trimester (Ritz & Yu-1999)	100ppm	Maximum NCI CO level during run cycle in all vented appliances(stable) Maximum NCI CO for all oil appliances
5ppm	1st visual display on NSI 3000 Low Level CO Monitor	200ppm	First listed level(established in 1930) healthy adults will have symptoms-headaches, nausea NIOSH & OSHA recommend evacuation of workplace Maximum "Air Free" CO for vented water heater and unvented heaters (ANSI Z21) UL approved alarms must sound between 30 – 60 minutes(NSI 3000 – 30 seconds)
9ppm	ASHRAE standard for allowable spillage from vented appliances, indoors, for 8 hours exposure daily. EPA standard for outdoors for 8 hours and a maximum 3 times per year. (Clean Air Act)	400ppm	Healthy adults will have headaches within 1-2 hours. Life threatening after 3 hours Maximum "Air Free" CO in all vented heating appliances (ANSI Z21) Maximum EPA levels for industrial flue exhaust UL Alarms must alarm within 15 minutes (NSI 3000 – 30 seconds) Maximum recommended light-off CO for all appliances – NCI (except oil)
10ppm	Outdoor level of CO found associated with a significant increase in heart disease deaths and hospital admissions for congestive heart failure. (JAMA, Penny) 1st ambient level occupants should be notified-NCI Protocol	800ppm	Healthy adults will have nausea, dizziness, convulsions within 45 minutes. Unconscious within 2 hours then Death(established in 1930) Maximum "Air Free" CO for unvented gas ovens (ANSI Z21)
15-20ppm	First level World Health Organization lists as causing impaired performance, decrease in exercise time and vigilance 1st Alarm level for NSI 3000 Low Level CO Monitor-5 minutes	800ppm+	Death in less than one hour
25ppm	Maximum allowable in a Parking Garage (International Mechanical Code)	2000ppm	EPA standard for new vehicle emissions
27ppm	21% increase in cardio respiratory complaints (Kurt-1978)	3000ppm+	Typical emissions from propane lift trucks, gasoline powered tools etc. Death in less than 30 minutes.
30ppm	Earliest onset of exercise induced angina (World Health Organization) 1st visual display on UL2034 approved CO Alarm-Must not alarm before 30 days		
35ppm	US NIOSH recommended 8 hour maximum workplace exposure EPA standard for outdoors for 1 hour and a maximum of 1 time per year Level many fire departments wear breathing apparatus before entering 2nd ambient level occupants should be notified and space ventilated 2nd Alarm level for NSI 3000 Low Level Monitor-5 minutes		

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**All burning results in very fine micro particulates and there is no safe level of this asbestos sized, dangerous air pollutant. Solid fuels, such as pellets and especially wood, produce more smoke and emit more fine particulate air pollutants than cleaner fuels such as gas and electricity.**

## Bylaws & Bans

**\*\*I am beginning to compile a list of municipalities that are acting on wood smoke emissions. Please [send me a link](#) to any that you find to be added to the list.\*\***

**Golden, BRITISH COLUMBIA**- passed a bylaw prohibiting the installation of any solid fuel burning appliance (Bylaw # 1150).

**Hampstead, QUEBEC** - banned all new installations of wood stoves and ordered existing wood stoves to be removed within 7 years. (Bylaw # 729-2)

**Montreal, QUEBEC (Apr. 29/2009)** - no further installation of any wood burning stoves or fireplaces.

**Suffolk, NEW JERSEY** - bans all OWBs within 1000 feet of another house.

**Stillwater, MINNESOTA** - bans all wood burning or boiling stoves - existing and future (March 11, 2010).

**Pleasant Prairie, WISCONSIN** - bans all new outdoor wood furnaces and wood boilers.

**Savage City, MINNESOTA** - prohibits outdoor wood boilers (OWBs).

**Burnsville, MINNESOTA** - banned OWBs December 2008.

**New Prague, MINNESOTA** - total ban on OWBs.

**Grand Forks, BRITISH COLUMBIA** - The bylaw states that “no person shall create a nuisance using a wood burning appliance in such a way as to disturb the health and comfort of two or more persons from separate dwellings.” Enforcement would be complaint driven and fines could be up to \$500.

**Houston, BRITISH COLUMBIA** - requires uncertified appliances to be removed by 2010.

**St. Thomas, ONTARIO** - prohibits the use of outdoor fireplaces including wood boilers and chimeneas.

**Sarnia, ONTARIO** - has set stringent restrictions on setback distances for outdoor boiler operations from the nearest dwellings and property lines.

**Nation, ONTARIO** - outdoor wood boiler specifications have been set which include minimum lot sizes, distance from property lines and distances from property buildings.

**Elmira, NEW YORK** - Ban on smoke and other deleterious fumes that cross property lines onto the property of another. Fines are \$250 for a second offence or a jail term. Best ban in the country!

**Marion, IOWA** -prohibits new outdoor wood-burning boilers within city limits and to regulate existing setups. All existing boilers must be registered by Jan. 1; have smokestacks two feet higher than any residential roof within 300 feet of the system; and be removed when the property changes hands.

**CONNECTICUT - Avon, Granby, Tolland, Hebron, Woodbridge, South Windsor, Portland, Norfolk, Ridgefield, Haddam, Cheshire, West Hartford, Hamden, North Haven and New Fairfield** – 15 towns have banned outdoor wood furnaces in order to protect the health and property values of their citizens.

**Inver Grove Heights, MINNESOTA** - Nov. 15, 2010 - council bans all OWBs. All OWBs must be removed from properties by Oct. 01, 2011.

**The STATE of WASHINGTON** - has laws to address neighbor's wood smoke. According to the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, “generating excessive smoke is not only unneighborly, it’s illegal. Under state regulations, smoke from a person’s chimney cannot exceed 20 percent opacity for six consecutive minutes. Greater smoke densities could result in fines from air pollution control officials. It is always illegal to smoke out your neighbor. Everyone has a right to breathe clean air. If smoke from your fire is affecting your neighbors, it is considered a nuisance and subject to enforcement action.”

**Salmon Arm, BRITISH COLUMBIA** - No person shall install an Outdoor Solid-Fuel Combustion Appliance in or about any premises.

**Huron East, ONTARIO** - Bylaw passed - all new OWB's to have minimum setback allowances and lot sizes. A great improvement over what they had before – nothing.

**Nappanee** - Bans Outdoor Wood Furnaces

**Twinsburg, OHIO** - Council voted 7-0 in favor of adding outdoor wood-burning furnaces or boilers to a list of items that are restricted.

**Marion County, INDIANA** - OWB ban.

**Evansville, INDIANA** – OWB ban.

**Long Beach, INDIANA** - OWB ban.

**City of LaPorte, INDIANA** - OWB ban.

**Michigan City, INDIANA** - OWB ban.

## *Editorial*

**August...** Now that summer is in full-swing so are the outdoor burners. What they derive from this back-woods activity is beyond my comprehension. I would think there are other activities outdoors that would be far more enjoyable than trying to avoid the smoke as you sit around a roaring fire in temperatures that are already warm!

People who have spent a long winter waiting to be able to enjoy time outdoors and to open their windows at last for fresh air are now finding they can do neither due to smoke drifting across their property and infiltrating their homes.

Why anyone thinks that their burning does not harm their neighbors is something I've been asking myself for years. I get endless emails from those that are shocked to find out that there is nothing they can do short of taking lengthy and expensive legal action. They go before their local councils and are treated as if they are the guilty ones. Why? It is the municipality that is at fault for allowing a resident to be submitted to the dangerous toxins in wood smoke. It is not that the members of council don't know about the hazards of wood smoke as it is all over the Internet and news.

Burners are a minority in most cities. Residents wanting clean air to breathe are a majority. So, why don't council members listen?

A nuisance bylaw can be created or amended to cover wood smoke. People need to contact their council members, start a petition or whatever it takes to wake them up to the fact that nobody wants to live in a smoky environment.

*Shirley*

## BOZO of the Month



In my opinion

### **London, Ontario**

**London just put a no-burn bylaw into effect for the duration of the heat wave that is hanging over the area. It will be lifted when weather conditions improve.**

**I suppose, if you don't think about it, it makes sense???**

**Apparently the governing body realizes that wood smoke contributes to poor air quality. Why then do they wait until conditions get so bad from the outdoor burning adding to the other pollutants in the air before ending outdoor burning?**

**I have personally heard from a few Londoners that have had to turn their neighbors in even though the no-burn bylaw was published in the newspaper. It shows that just having a bylaw does not stop the burners that think they can do anything they want on their own properties even if it affects the health of others and forces their neighbors to keep their windows closed. The neighbors cannot enjoy their own properties while wood smoke billows across their properties.**

**When is the municipality of London going to take action on nuisance wood smoke?**

**For anyone in London that wishes to join those living there who are doing all they can to get a nuisance bylaw into effect, please [email me](#) for their contact address.**

**Bylaw amendments.... Have they heard of them?**

*Shirley*

## Photos and Videos

Just a few photos to show to your public officials and others you want to convince that only a ban on smoke release will change this!

[Click here for videos](#)



[To see some photos that victims of wood smoke have sent click here](#)

To have your own photo listed, send an email to: [s.brandie@hotmail.com](mailto:s.brandie@hotmail.com)

## **LINKS & MORE**

[Click here for a heart-breaking story & video of a family subjected to wood smoke.](#)

[Click here to see Clive Stott's peaceful, but meaningful protest of forestry burning in Australia.](#)

[My PowerPoint Show](#)

[Video sent by email](#)

[Chase, B.C. video](#)

		<p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#"><u><b>Wood Burner Smoke</b></u></a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Editor's Site</p>
	 <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="http://cleanairtas.com"><u><b>cleanairtas.com</b></u></a></p>	 <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#"><u><b>Freedom of Air</b></u></a></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#"><u><b>TAKE BACK THE AIR</b></u></a></p>	
		 <p style="text-align: center;"><a href="#"><u><b>RAWSEP</b></u></a></p>



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“Burning 2 cords of wood produces the same amount of mutagenic (capable of causing cell mutations that can cause cancer) particles as driving 13 gasoline-powered cars 10,000 miles each at 20 miles/gallon. These figures indicate that the worst contribution that an individual is likely to make to the mutagenicity of the air is using a wood stove for heating, followed by a diesel car.” (Dr. Joellen Lewtas, Contribution of Source Emissions of the Mutagenicity of Ambient Urban Air Particles. U.S., EPA, #91-131.6, 1991)

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## **Canadian Action Activities**

Wood smoke is a major problem in all of America and Canada. National efforts are gaining momentum. Regardless of where we live, our actions should focus on getting our national governments to regulate wood smoke. To make an impact, if each reader calls or emails each of these contacts, we can move mountains.

Go for it now!

Health Canada assesses scientific evidence about the health effects of wood smoke and makes this information available to Canadians. Health Canada is also working with other government departments to determine the best ways to minimize risks associated with wood smoke.

In addition, Health Canada is a contributor to the *Burn it Smart!* Campaign sponsored by Natural Resources Canada.

**Environment Canada:** [www.ec.gc.ca/cleanair](http://www.ec.gc.ca/cleanair)

**Health Canada:** [air@hc-sc.gc.ca](mailto:air@hc-sc.gc.ca)

Air Health Effects Division, Safe Environments Program, Health Canada  
400 Cooper Street Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9 Telephone: (613) 957-1876

Natural Resources Canada [Burn it Smart!](#) Sir William Logan Building,  
11th Floor, 580 Booth Street, Ottawa, ON K1A 0E4

Write or email to your local council & MPs to request that they create or amend a bylaw to cover nuisance smoke. Preferably, a ban on all wood burning in residential areas.

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The Ontario Ministry of the Environment has released the latest news on Smog  
<http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/en/air/smog/index.php>

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**[Click here for the Canadian Bill of Rights](#)** You can apply for a review [here](#).

## **U.S. Action Activities**

### **URGENT—Immediate Action ALWAYS Needed**

**A new EPA-certified wood stove promotion gives a 30% tax credit and a huge discount to the public. It is being funded by stimulus money from the US government. This flies in the face of the known hazards of wood smoke that the EPA acknowledges on their website. If we don't stop our states' stimulus money from funding this major promotion, it will be next to impossible to regulate or ban wood burning in any form.**

**If you have never protested wood smoke or called your public officials before, this is the time to do it!**

- **Contact your US Senators and Representatives, as well as your state Senators and Representatives and City Council members. Ask them to see that the stimulus money does not go towards this promotion. It is crucial to let your elected officials know that you don't want the stimulus money used for this promotion in your community—but only to apply to gas or electric technology. (California has a change-out program that only allows swap-outs to gas or electric.)**
- **Let them know that wood smoke is a major health hazard and is a major contributor to global warming.**
- **Send an email to others and ask them for their help too. (See **suggested email below**).**
- **Be sure to call your US legislators and State legislators and City Council Members, to alert them to the problem and asking for their help too in keeping new EPA certified wood burning equipment out of your community, even if a state-wide promotion allows them.**
- **If we don't stop this unthinkable promotion, there is little hope for a healthy legacy for our children and grandchildren.**

**Action #1-** Suggested message for calling and emailing U.S. legislators and state legislators. Please also relay on to others and urge them to contact others.

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**Date:**

**Dear (elected official):**

Please use your influence to disallow stimulus money to be used for EPA wood stove promotion in **(your state and/or your community.)**

According to the EPA's own website, wood smoke is a killer responsible for premature deaths nation-wide at a rate of 3% of the total deaths every year from fine particle pollution. (Harvard School of Public Health). That is close to 73,000 people in the U.S. each year--an epidemic! Wood smoke is extremely hazardous for children, the elderly and especially those with asthma. Asthma is already the number one reason for school absenteeism. It is even implicated in sudden infant death syndrome.

Our states are looking for ways to limit fine particulate pollution and better air quality. This should be a "no-brainer." Wood smoke emits over 9,600 % more lead than natural gas, according to the EPA's own data. It also emits arsenic, mercury, formaldehyde, polyaromatic hydrocarbons and dioxins, persistent organic compounds that do not break down in the environment or in human lungs, crops, soil and water supply. See <http://BurningIssues.org> for the facts.

Please do not allow stimulus money to be used for promoting more pollution.

**(Sign your name and contact info)**

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## About the Editors:

### Shirley Brandie



Ontario Director of Canadian Clean Air Alliance <http://canadiancleanairalliance.ca>

She is retired from a medical laboratory and currently doing in-depth research on the effects of wood smoke on health and the environment.

Web site: <http://WoodBurnerSmoke.net>



### Julie Mellum Minneapolis

Julie is a Realtor who knows that wood smoke devalues real estate as a “material fact” that can affect a potential buyer’s use and enjoyment of your property. She continually researches the latest science on wood smoke and is a member of the Edina, MN Community Health Committee.

Web site: [Take Back the Air](#)

**If you would like to have your wood smoke story published, [click here to email it.](#)**

**\* We do not accept responsibility for errors in articles submitted for publication. It is the responsibility of the author to ensure the facts are, to the best of their knowledge, correct. \*\***

**\*\* Please note that articles submitted for publication may be edited for grammar, punctuation and sentence structure.**

**Send an email to [s.brandie@hotmail.com](mailto:s.brandie@hotmail.com) to be added to the mailing list.**