



# NEWS

[www.baaqmd.gov](http://www.baaqmd.gov)

**For Immediate Release**  
**Wednesday, March 30, 2005**

**Contact: Teresa Lee: 415.749.4900**

## **Air District Winter Survey Shows Positive Trends**

An increasing number of Bay Area residents are aware of the negative health effects of breathing wood smoke -- from 49% in 2001, to 56% in 2002 and to 66% in 2005, according to a recent survey commissioned by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

"Reducing wood smoke is good for public health, particularly for those who have asthma, emphysema or heart disease," said Air District Executive Officer Jack Broadbent. "The public's awareness of the negative health impacts of breathing wood smoke is encouraging, and shows that our public outreach about wood smoke air pollution is having an impact," Broadbent said.

The survey also shows growing support for local government ordinances to reduce wood smoke pollution from new construction, increasing from 47% in 2001, to 54% in 2003 and to 62% in 2005. At present, 34 cities and seven counties in the nine-county Air District have adopted a wood smoke ordinance based on the Air District model version. The ordinance allows natural gas fireplaces as well as EPA certified inserts and woodstoves in new construction and in renovations that involve fireplaces.

The survey of 700 Bay Area residents was completed on evenings in January and February 2005 using random digit dialing. Additional results include:

- 64% of respondents had at least one fireplace or woodstove
- 43% of those who had fireplaces indicated they would not use them this winter, up from 39% last year
- Among households with a fireplace, 20% had natural gas fireplaces

"Limiting wood smoke pollution is good for public health and we will continue to urge local government leaders to adopt an ordinance based on our Model Wood Smoke Ordinance," said Broadbent. "We are concerned about wood smoke, particularly the very small particles that penetrate deep into the lungs and cause lung damage," he said.

As part of the Air District's winter outreach program, Santa Clara county residents were advised about a woodstove change-out program for their county which offers rebates to residents who replace wood burning fireplaces and old wood stoves with natural gas appliances. Since the program began in the fall of 2003, the Air District has processed rebates for 1,300 households.

More information about preventing wood smoke air pollution is available at [http://www.baaqmd.gov/pio/wood\\_burning/index.asp](http://www.baaqmd.gov/pio/wood_burning/index.asp)

# # #