Advisory

.

Spare the Air TONIGHT!
Air Quality Forecast to be Unhealthy

Today, December 1, 2006, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) is issuing its first *Spare the Air Tonight* Advisory of the year. For the next 24 hours, as higher concentrations of particulate pollution are forecast, the Air District asks Bay Area residents **to not burn wood and to limit their driving.**

There is no free transit during the Spare the Air Tonight season.

The tiny particles in wood smoke and vehicle exhaust can cause serious health problems. Due to their small size they can be inhaled deep into the lungs. These microscopic particles are only 2.5 microns in size, or even smaller, roughly 25 times smaller than the diameter of a human hair. Small particle pollution poses a health hazard for the general public, and is especially dangerous for the very young, the elderly, and for people with respiratory or cardiovascular disease.

"We are asking the public to help keep the air clean and healthy during this *Spare the Air Tonight* advisory," said Air District Executive Officer Jack Broadbent. "By making clean air choices, such as not burning wood and driving less, we can help protect the health of our families and communities."

Winter meteorology plays a role in air pollution. Unlike summer smog that peaks in the late afternoon, winter particulates are most highly concentrated at night and in the early morning hours. On winter evenings, the earth cools the air close to the ground, which creates an inversion layer of warmer air above. When there is no wind, pollution trapped under this lid of warm air can build up rapidly to unhealthy levels. During the winter, the angle of the sun is so shallow that the earth does not radiate enough heat in the early morning hours to lift the inversion layer, so particulate pollution does not decline until mid-morning.

For more background and air quality information visit our website:
www.sparetheair.org

# # # #