

# Focus on: Wood stove standards

## Reducing Fine Particle Air Pollution

### The Problem

Smoke from wood stoves is a major source of air pollution in Washington and a major threat to public health. New, clean-burning wood stoves can minimize that smoke, but Washington's laws regulating wood stoves are outdated. EPA's certification program is not providing assurance that stoves are properly tested and certified, as [its own internal review found](#).<sup>1</sup>

Alaska and a coalition of Northeast states conducted a comprehensive review and found systemic deficiencies in test reports for wood stoves that had received certification from EPA. Establishing a state program to review testing of stoves can fill this gap and ensure that stoves are properly tested before being certified.

### Why This Matters

Wood stoves are the primary human-caused source of [fine particle pollution](#) in Washington during the winter.<sup>2</sup> Exposure to smoke from residential wood heating can lead to long-term [health effects](#) — including asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, cancer, and premature death.<sup>3</sup> Children, people 65 and older, and people with pre-existing

health issues are at greatest risk from fine particle pollution. In addition, wood heating is more prevalent in rural communities and low-income households, meaning that residents in these areas face a higher exposure to wood smoke.

Everyone in Washington deserves clean air. Making sure that new wood stoves meet existing federal standards is one of the most effective means we have to protect the air we all breathe. This will also help avoid nonattainment with federal air quality standards, which results in stricter and more costly controls.

### Ecology's Proposal

Ecology is proposing legislation that would allow us to review and verify the results of required EPA tests for wood stoves. This will ensure wood stoves fully meet national standards, so consumers and residents can have confidence in the performance of the wood stoves installed in their homes. The proposed legislation would also direct us to keep our state aligned with the latest national standards.

### Related Information

- <https://ecology.wa.gov/about-us/budget-legislative-priorities/2025-legislative-priorities>



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<sup>1</sup><https://www.epa.ig.gov/reports/evaluation/epas-residential-wood-heater-program-does-not-provide-reasonable-assurance>

<sup>2</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/air-climate/air-quality/air-quality-targets/air-quality-standards/particle-pollution>

<sup>3</sup> <https://ecology.wa.gov/air-climate/air-quality/smoke-fire/health-effects>