



Contact:
Kathy Coulter, Public Information Officer
(530) 757-3657

‘Don’t Light Tonight’ Season Begins Monday, November 1

October 25, 2010 -- In an effort to protect public health from the adverse effects of woodsmoke, the Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District begins their voluntary ‘Don’t Light Tonight’ (DLT) program on Monday, November 1. A DLT advisory is issued when particle pollution is forecast to be 25 micrograms per cubic meter ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) of air or greater. Advisories are available in three formats: on the website at www.ysaqmd.org, through electronic notifications for those that sign up at <http://ysaqmd.enviroflash.org> or by calling the burn line at (530) 757-3787.

“The threshold for calling a voluntary DLT is lower than the EPA’s standard of 35 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ in order to be more protective of public health since it is a voluntary program,” said Mat Ehrhardt, executive director of the Yolo-Solano Air District. “As temperatures drop and winter sets in, the use of woodstoves and fireplaces can seriously affect our air quality by causing an increase in particulate pollution. These particles float in the air and can be inhaled deep into the lungs,” added Ehrhardt.

During a DLT advisory, the use of wood-burning devices, including fireplaces, pellet stoves, and wood stoves is discouraged. If woodburning is your sole source of heat, the District recommends using an EPA certified appliance and follow these steps:

- (1) Always burn small pieces of aged, dry hardwood. Unseasoned wood has lots of moisture, which causes fire to smoke. Choose pellets over wood when possible as they burn 50% cleaner and with less ash clean up.
- (2) When storing wood, stack it under cover in a dry ventilated area. Freshly cut wood needs to be stored for about eight to twelve months before burning.

- (3) Never burn household trash, chemically treated or painted wood. It can pollute the air and produce poisonous gases.
- (4) Stack wood loosely so air circulates around it which reduces heavy smoke emissions.
- (5) Keep the flame active. Your fire should only smoke when you first light it and when you add extra fuel (and then only for a few minutes).
- (6) Don't let your fire smolder overnight – keep enough air in the fire to maintain a flame.
- (7) Check your chimney regularly to see how well your fire is burning. If there is excess smoke coming from the chimney, increase the air supply to your fire.
- (8) If you are buying a wood stove or insert, buy only EPA Phase II certified.

“Wood smoke pollution is associated with a number of serious health risks and is particularly harmful to children, the elderly and those with respiratory problems. It's the responsibility of all woodstove and fireplace owners to follow these easy steps and minimize the harmful effects of smoke pollution on themselves, their families and neighbors,” said Ehrhardt.

Yolo County residents and residents in the northeast portion of Solano County can receive automatic notifications by registering for Enviroflash at www.ysaqmd.org.

The Yolo-Solano Air Quality Management District is dedicated to protecting human health and property from the harmful effects of air pollution. A free brochure with information on “Light it Right” tips and the “Don't Light Tonight” program is available by contacting the District at (530) 757-3650 or (800) 287-3650 or on the website: www.ysaqmd.org.

###