



Wood Burning Appliance Implementation Guide

The Mendocino County Air Quality Management Board has adopted District Regulation 4.1. Regulation 4.1 places restrictions on the installation of new wood-burning appliances in Mendocino County. Regulation 4.1 became effective May 5th, 2007.

The basic outline of the Regulation is as follows –

- Existing stoves and fireplaces are unaffected, except they cannot be used to burn garbage.
- Prohibition on new “open” fireplaces unless an EPA approved insert is installed.
- Prohibition on new wood-burning devices in attached multi-family homes, commercial and public buildings (including public and private schools).
- Prohibition on wood-burning devices in all new major subdivisions (using Subdivision Map Act standards).
- Prohibition on Residential outdoor boilers (unless they are approved by a California air pollution control agency).
- Only “approved” wood burning devices can be installed in residences (outside of new major subdivisions). Approved devices are either –
 - Pellet-fueled wood heaters (EPA exempted),
 - EPA certified wood stoves,
 - EPA certified fireplace inserts,
 - Devices approved by any California air pollution control agency (call the District to verify)

Historical buildings, display of wood-burning devices for sale, museums and railroad equipment are exempt.

- Outdoor recreational and cooking devices are exempt from Regulation 4.1

To implement Regulation 4.1 the District recommends planning staff do the following–

- Add a condition to all new major subdivisions after 5/5/2007 prohibiting all wood-burning devices. Including this prohibition in any CC&Rs is also recommended.
- Add a condition to all projects (including minor subdivisions) that wood burning devices must comply with Air Quality Management District Regulation 4.1
- When conducting development review or pre-project meetings for commercial projects (including hotels) be aware of any proposed fireplaces or wood-burning devices. Inform

applicants that fireplaces or wood-burning devices are not allowed in commercial buildings (cooking fires are exempt). Gas fireplaces are allowed.

To implement Regulation 4.1 the District recommends plan check staff do the following –

- Ensure that all plans for new attached multi-family, commercial or public buildings do not include wood burning devices.
- Ensure that any remodel plans do not include new wood-burning devices in attached multi-family, commercial or public buildings – unless an existing wood-burning device is replaced.
- Ensure that all plans for all projects submitted after 5/5/072 do not contain open fireplaces.
- Ensure that all plans for new homes in major subdivisions created after 5/5/07 do not include wood burning devices.
- Ensure that all plans that include wood-burning devices clearly identify the type (i.e. “pellet stove”) of device and any relevant certifications (i.e. “EPA Certified Fireplace Insert”).
- Refer any plans containing “outdoor residential boilers,” to the District to determine compliance before approval. Alternatively, ask applicant to receive District approval before submitting plans for plan check.
- Refer unusual situations to the District – staff will issue a letter clarifying the issue.
- Be aware that outdoor recreational devices, fire pits and Historical (state, local or federally recognized) buildings are exempt.
- Fireplaces are already banned in Brooktrails, under the Specific Plan EIR. Other communities may have CCR or EIR conditions.

The District recommends that Building Inspectors check for the following –

- Wood-burning devices which are not shown on approved plans, including outdoor wood boilers (may look like storage structures,).
- Ensure that any wood-burning devices present match approved plans.
- Check for EPA certification labels on all non-pellet fueled wood-burning devices - all pellet fuel devices are District approved regardless of labels.
- The District may inspect or exempt any wood-burning device, especially in unusual situations. The District will issue an approval letter to keep on the project site.
- Be aware that outdoor recreational devices, fire pits and Historical (state, local or federally recognized) buildings are exempt.
- Unusual installations or devices should be referred to the District.