

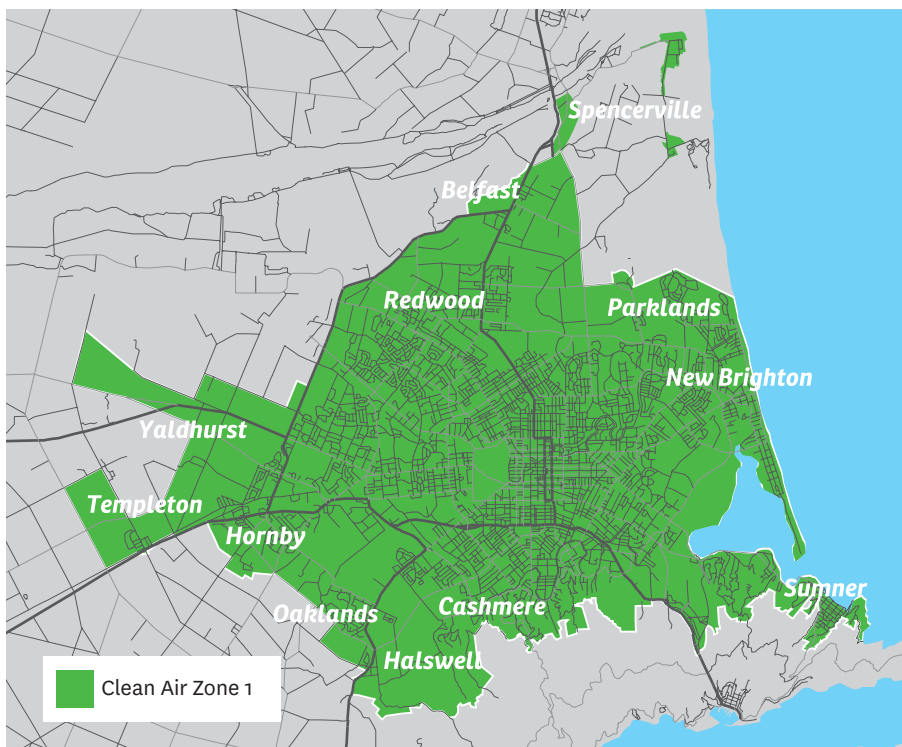
# Clean air rules for Christchurch

*From 1 April 2010, the use of open fires and non-complying<sup>1</sup> solid fuel burners that are 15 years or older is banned between 1 April and 30 September.*

This means that from the 15-year anniversary of a burner's first installation as recorded on a building permit or consent, it will be illegal to use it between 1 April and 30 September in that year or any successive year. To install or use a burner without a building permit is also illegal.

These rules about home heating apply to homes in Christchurch Clean Air Zone 1 (see map below).

Find out how old your burner is at [tools.ecan.govt.nz/WoodburnerAge/](http://tools.ecan.govt.nz/WoodburnerAge/)



## The reason for the new rules

Clean air is one of the top environmental priorities for Canterbury people. In winter, particulate pollution caused by home heating in Christchurch regularly exceeds the health-based National Environmental Standard. Christchurch must meet the government's National Environmental Standard for air quality by 2013 and these rules are aimed at helping us get there.

Environment Canterbury has gone through an in-depth planning process with the community to develop an Air Plan to deliver cleaner air. The rules for home heating on this information sheet are part of that plan.

<sup>1</sup> A non-complying burner does not meet clean air standards. Visit: [www.ecan.govt.nz/approved-woodburners](http://www.ecan.govt.nz/approved-woodburners) for a list of approved burners. If used incorrectly, complying burners may also exceed these standards.

## Are there any exceptions?

If a prolonged (three hours or more) or unplanned electricity network power cut occurs, open fires or older burners may be used for emergency heating or cooking. Open fire places and older solid fuel burners do not have to be sealed up or removed unless Environment Canterbury's Clean Heat Project installs a new heating system in your house.

The use of an open fire or solid fuel burner is permitted in heritage homes as listed in the Christchurch City Plan providing the appliances, including the chimney, are original features of the house.

## What are the consequences of using illegal heating?

**From 1 April 2010, enforcement officers will be out and about:**

- On the first visit by an enforcement officer, if you are found to be discharging you will be issued with an infringement notice (a fine of \$300).
- On the second visit, if you are still discharging you will be issued with a further infringement notice, and an abatement notice<sup>2</sup>.
- On a third and subsequent visit, if you are still discharging, you will be issued with a third infringement notice, and be ordered to pay for failing to comply with the abatement notice (\$300 + \$750 = \$1050, for each subsequent occasion).
- If you continue to breach the rules, Environment Canterbury may pursue a prosecution.

## How will Environment Canterbury know if you are using illegal heating?

1. Neighbours regularly report smoky chimneys that are causing a nuisance. Environment Canterbury will investigate any complaint before deciding on a course of action.
2. All solid fuel burners should have a building consent or Code of Compliance Certificate that shows when it was installed. We have a list of addresses for all building consents for burners issued more than 15 years ago. If we have no information on whether the appliance is still in use, a smoky chimney may prompt an enforcement officer to investigate.
3. After 1 April 2010, enforcement officers may make spot checks for smoky chimneys in areas where winter air pollution is highest.

## What help is available to switch to cleaner heating?

Environment Canterbury's Clean Heat Project offers financial help to make the switch to cleaner heating as easy as possible. Call 0800 329 276 or visit [www.cleanheat.co.nz](http://www.cleanheat.co.nz) to find out if we can help you.



## How can I find out more?

For more information on air quality or the Air Plan and the rules on home heating, go to [www.ecan.govt.nz/air](http://www.ecan.govt.nz/air) or call Environment Canterbury's customer services on 03 353 9007.

For answers to some frequently asked questions, visit: [www.ecan.govt.nz/quickanswers/air](http://www.ecan.govt.nz/quickanswers/air)

To report a smoky chimney to the 24 hour Pollution Hotline, call 0800 76 55 88. An Environment Canterbury enforcement officer will investigate.

<sup>2</sup> An abatement notice formally requires an activity to cease, in this case, the use of the banned appliance. The penalty for failing to comply with an abatement notice is \$750.