

Clean air rules for Kaiapoi

From 1 May 2010 the use of all open fires and solid fuel burners that are 15 years or older is not allowed without a resource consent at any time of year.

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 at any time from that date onwards. To install or use a burner without a building permit is also illegal.

When a home is sold; the new owners or occupiers have to comply with the new rules immediately.

These rules about home heating apply to homes in Kaiapoi Clean Air Zone 1.

Find out how old your burner is at 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 Kaiapoi regularly exceeds the health-based National Environmental Standard for air quality. Kaiapoi must meet the National Environmental Standard 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.



Are there any exceptions?

Even after the clean air rules for Kaiapoi become effective in May 2010, you will still be able to use an open fire or older burner for emergency heating or cooking during an unplanned electricity network power outage lasting three hours or more. 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 schedule AQL4(c) of the proposed Natural Resources Regional Plan providing the appliances, including the chimney, are original features of the house.

What are the consequences of using illegal heating?

Although the rules take effect from May 2010, Kaiapoi people have been given an extra year to prepare as the new rules won't be actively enforced until May 2011.

However, if a smoky chimney is reported between 1 May 2010 and 30 April 2011, enforcement officers will take appropriate action which may include an official warning. For repeat offences or the burning of materials other than paper, cardboard or untreated wood, further enforcement action may be necessary.

From May 2011:

- 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 found to be discharging, you will be issued with a further infringement notice, and an abatement notice.
- On the third visit, if you are found to be discharging, you will be issued with a third infringement notice, and be ordered to pay for failing to comply with an 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 which are causing them 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 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 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

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

¹ 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.