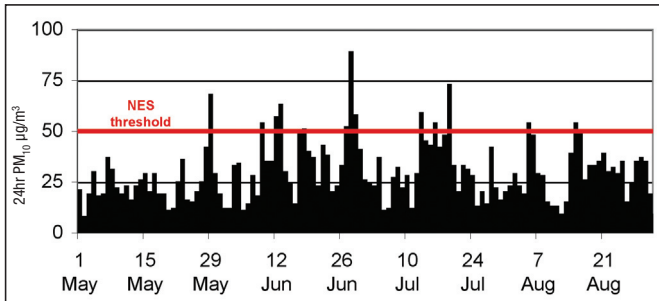


winterairreport - Ashburton

May - August 2007

Ashburton's winter-time air pollution from solid fuel fires is a real problem and can seriously affect the health and well-being of our residents. Environment Canterbury is working with your local communities and council to clear the air.



NES is the National Environmental Standards threshold and is set at 50 micrograms of particulate per cubic metre of air. Only one exceedence of this level is allowed after 1 September 2013.

Ashburton's air pollution this winter

Ashburton had 13 high air pollution nights this winter to 31 August 2007, less than half last year's total of 29 nights to date, but similar to earlier years. Ashburton's highest concentration this year was 89 on June 28. The town's air quality was also monitored by Environment Canterbury in 1999, 2000 and 2005 with between 13 and 18 high pollution nights in those winters.

The number of high pollution nights each winter depends on the weather as well as how much air pollution is produced. The worst pollution usually happens after sunset on clear, calm and cold nights, often when a frost is forecast. Cloudy evenings, fewer frosts and windier weather over the town contributed to the lower number of air pollution readings compared to 2006 when snow and colder temperatures meant Ashburton residents may have used their solid fuel burners more often and wet firewood to keep their houses warm.

2013 – just six years away!

Only one high pollution night a year is the target of the National Environmental Standards for Air Quality (NES). The deadline for this is 1 September 2013 – just six years away! We all need to work together to make this happen. Converting your home to clean heat appliances, burning dry wood and insulating your home can make a difference.

Air pollution damages health

Air pollution is damaging to people's health. Babies, young children, people with breathing problems and older people are most affected by the tiny, invisible pollution particles that lodge in people's lungs – even indoors when the doors and windows are shut. We need to clear the air for everybody's sake.

Building or renovating: think clean heat and insulation

If you are renovating or building now is the time to think about including clean heat options and insulating ceilings, floors and walls to keep your house warm. More than 40% of any heat generated inside your home escapes through the ceilings. Windows and doors should also be sealed for draughts and curtains closed at sunset to retain as much heat as possible.

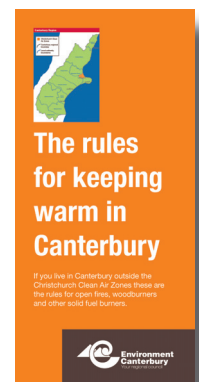
Dry wood: more heat, less air pollution

If you do have a woodburner or open fire, make sure your wood is dry and has a moisture content of less than 20%. To check whether your firewood is dry you can get it tested for free at the Ashburton District Council. Burning dry wood creates less air pollution and provides up to 40% more heat. Get next season's wood soon and stack it well so it has plenty of time to dry out before next winter.

A wide range of clean heat options to suit you

If you are considering changing to cleaner heating options for your home, the list of authorised heating appliances has been updated. Heat pumps and pellet fires are a popular choice for many Canterbury residents, along with approved woodburners. For more information visit Environment Canterbury's website www.ecan.govt.nz/approved-woodburners. By clicking on a map of your area you will see a list of all heating appliances that can be installed in your home without a resource consent.

Ashburton residents can also easily access information about the rules for open fires, woodburners and other solid fuel burners. "The rules for keeping warm in Canterbury" contains information about whether you need a resource consent for your solid fuel burner. For a copy of the brochure please call Environment Canterbury Customer Services on 0800 324 636, or visit www.ecan.govt.nz/air.



For more information about Environment Canterbury's Air Plan, visit www.ecan.govt.nz/Air/AirPlan.