

## **Air officials urge valley residents to consider health impact of burning**

Avenal Chimes, Wed., Dec. 4, 2013

Check Before You Burn runs each winter from November through February and reduces wintertime particulates (PM) by restricting the use of wood-burning devices when air quality is poor. This curtailment is in place because of elevated levels of coarse particulate matter (PM10). Wood-burning forecasts are issued each day by county.

Residential wood burning is the single largest source of PM during winter and can pump 17 tons of PM into Valley skies daily. PM exacerbates respiratory illness, such as asthma, and causes lung infections and bronchitis. There are two exceptions to wood-burning prohibitions:

- If the residence does not have access to natural-gas service, even if propane is used; or
- If burning solid fuel is the sole source of heat for the residence.

Prohibition violations are subject to fines. Daily wood-burning forecasts are available each day at 4:30 p.m. by calling 1-800 SMOG INFO (766-4463), or by subscribing to the Air District's daily air quality forecast at <http://www.valleyair.org/lists/list.htm>. A free iPhone app, Valleyair, is at iTunes and the App Store.