



**City of Albuquerque  
Environmental Health Department  
Air Quality Program**

August 1, 2025

**Wood Burning Exemption Request**

Dear Resident:

This letter is sent in conjunction with a standard form for you to complete and return to our office, if you are interested in obtaining a Wood Burning Exemption for this winter. Albuquerque/Bernalillo County Air Quality Control Regulation 20.11.22 NMAC "Wood Burning" requires that exemptions be granted for no more than 150 days, thus necessitating the submission of a new application each year. If you need to burn wood for domestic heat or cooking this winter on no burn days, please fill out the enclosed Wood Burning Exemption Request and return it to the address as shown at the top of the form.

Part 22 of the regulations allows the Environmental Health Department Director to grant exemptions for the following reasons:

- 1) A sole source exemption if the Director determines that a solid fuel heating device is the sole source of heat for the building in which it is situated. New sole source exemptions shall not be issued after December 31, 1990 unless approved in writing by the Director for good cause. Sole source exemptions issued prior to December 31, 1990 may be renewed annually.
- 2) If there is an economic need to burn wood for heat. The Regulation requires that proof of membership in the (1) Food Stamp, (2) Medicaid, or (3) Low Income Energy Assistance programs be provided.
- 3) If there is a medical need for the therapeutic heat provided by fireplace or woodstove, and such need can be substantiated by a qualified physician. Medical exemptions are not granted for asthma or other respiratory problems, mainly because many complaints about wood smoke are received yearly from people who suffer those same respiratory problems. The majority of the medical exemptions are granted for arthritis, full or partial paralyzation, heart problems, or other serious illness that require strong radiant heat.

The Environmental Health Department Director has the discretion to grant exemptions for other reasons, if it is believed that failure to grant such exemption might endanger the health of the applicant or others. Please note also that the Director has the option of granting an exemption, granting an exemption with conditions, or denying an exemption.

The Air Quality Program of the Environmental Health Department, City of Albuquerque, enforces the regulations as established under the New Mexico Air Quality Control Act, NMSA 1978 74-2-4, 74-2-5.C; the Joint Air Quality Control Board Ordinance, Bernalillo County Ordinance 94-5; the Joint Air Quality Control Board Ordinance, Revised Ordinances of Albuquerque 1994-9-5-1-4. The Air Quality Program's jurisdiction includes the City of Albuquerque and all of Bernalillo County.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, require assistance with completing the application, or have questions regarding the wood burning program or other air quality matters, please call 768-1972.

Sincerely,

*Michael McKinstry*

Michael McKinstry,  
Environmental Health Manager, AQP/EHD/COA