

Pennsylvania's New Outdoor Wood Boiler Regulations

On October 2, 2010, new PA Department of Environmental Protection regulations for outdoor wood-fired boilers, or OWBs, came into effect for Pennsylvania. OWBs are one of the dirtiest ways to provide heat, and their toxic emissions led DEP to take this action.

Some of the new OWB regulations:

- New OWBs to be bought, sold, leased, distributed, or installed, in PA must meet EPA Phase 2 requirements, which limits emissions to 0.32 pounds or less of fine particles per million BTUs of heat output.
- New Phase 2 OWBs must be set back at least 50' from the nearest property line.
- New Phase 2 OWBs must have a permanently attached stack that is installed according to the manufacturer's specifications and extends at least 10' above the ground.
- OWBs old and new can only burn clean wood, pellets made from clean wood, or other alternatives to wood approved by the DEP, such as natural gas.

Please visit <http://www.pabulletin.com/secure/data/vol40/40-40/1876.html> to read the background behind the OWB changes and the entire regulation itself to ensure that you are complying with the law.



Photo via ecohome-charlie.blogspot.com



Photo via vtwoodsmoke.org

New Phase 2 OWBs can cost from \$9,000 to over \$20,000—about 15% more expensive than an older, non-Phase 2 OWB. Phase 2 OWBs are more efficient than older models, however, so less wood is needed for the same heat output.

Before purchasing a new OWB, please consider the danger that their emissions could pose to your health and the health of your family and neighbors. Make sure you have enough land to legally operate an OWB, and realize that setting your OWB 50' from the nearest property line might be legal but could still cause nuisances for your family and your community. Many municipalities have adopted stricter rules than the PA DEP's minimum to address citizen complaints. Much cleaner heating options exist, such as pellet stoves, oil stoves, and natural gas.



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Education made possible with funding from the PA Department of Environmental Protection