

Wood Stove Change Out Program 2018/2019

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Smoke forms when wood or other organic matter burns. The smoke from wood burning is made up of a complex mixture of gases and fine particles (also called particle pollution, particulate matter, or PM). In addition to particle pollution, wood smoke contains several toxic harmful air pollutants including: benzene, formaldehyde, acrolein and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs). The more efficiently you burn wood (e.g., using an EPA-certified wood stove and dry, seasoned wood) the less smoke is created.

The biggest health threat from smoke is from fine particles, also called fine particulate matter or PM2.5. These microscopic particles can get into your eyes and respiratory system, where they may cause **burning eyes, runny nose, and illnesses, such as bronchitis**. Fine particles can make asthma symptoms worse and trigger **asthma attacks**. Fine particles can also trigger **heart attacks, stroke, irregular heart rhythms, and heart failure**, especially in people who are already at risk for these conditions. (www.EPA.gov/burnwise/wood-smoke-and-your-health)

A component of PM is black carbon. Black carbon is a major contributor to greenhouse gases which exacerbates global warming. The goal of the Wood Stove Change-Out program is to eliminate high polluting wood burning devices by replacing them with natural gas, propane, electric or a significantly reduced PM 2.5 emitting, EPA Certified, wood burning stove (or insert) whose emissions do not exceed 2 grams per hour (GPH).

1. Question: “Who can participate in the Wood Stove Change-Out Program?”

Answer: For fiscal year 2018/2019, discounts are available to property owners within Monterey, Santa Cruz, and San Benito Counties who use a wood burning stove or fireplace as a heating source.

2. Question: “What discounts are offered this year?”

Answer: The discounts offered are broken down by Standard or Low Income Qualified as follows:

STANDARD VOUCHER		LOW INCOME QUALIFIED	
Wood to Wood*	\$1,000	Wood to Wood*	\$3,000
Wood to Alt Fuel#	\$1,500	Wood to Alt Fuel#	\$3,500

* ONLY Non EPA Certified stoves may be swapped out and only EPA Certified wood stoves that emit 2 GPH or less may be purchased.

Alternative fuel – Natural Gas/Propane or Electric. No pellet stoves can be funded with 2018 funds.

Low Income Qualified households can receive an additional \$2,000 (on top of whatever incentive they will receive based on replacement choice). See Question 13 for the low income qualification process.

3. Question: “If I just bought a stove, can I still receive the discount through this program?”

Answer: No. In order to receive the discount from the Wood Stove Change-Out Program, you must have a “Pre-Qualification Voucher” prior to purchasing your stove and you must purchase



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (cont.)



your stove from a participating wood stove dealer. Once received, your application will be reviewed to determine program eligibility. The applicable discount will be applied to a Pre-Qualification Voucher which will be emailed to you. If you do not have an email address, the voucher will be mailed. Once you receive your voucher, you can proceed to a participating wood stove dealer to schedule a pre-installation site visit with the participating installer. Once the installer verifies that you have a qualifying wood stove or fireplace you can purchase your stove or fireplace insert at one of our participating wood stove retailers.

4. Question: *“Can I install the stove myself?” / “Can I have another contractor install my stove?”*

Answer: No. Wood stove change-outs often involve gas lines and/or other specific infrastructure. For liability purposes the Air District made specific arrangements in advance to ensure appropriate insurance coverage was in place. Therefore, only the pre-authorized wood-stove dealer’s installers can perform the installation of the stoves in this program.

5. Question: *“What if I can’t complete the requirements within the 35 days allowed?”*

Answer: The installer’s initial site visit and wood stove or fireplace insert purchase are required to be completed within 35 days from the date that the voucher is issued. After that the install just needs to be completed within 90 days.

There are limited funds for this grant program therefore, wood stove and fireplace insert purchases and installation discounts are issued on a ‘first-come, first-served’ basis. If these required steps cannot be completed in the allotted time, your place in line will be forfeited so that someone else can use the discount. At that point, an applicant can reapply to begin the process over again.

6. Question: *“Why is this year’s program available to all of Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties when for years it was limited to San Lorenzo Valley residents?”*

Answer: The funding for this year’s program came from a different source, California Climate Investments. California Climate Investments’ focus is on Greenhouse Gas Reduction. Smoke from wood burning generates fine particulate matter (PM 2.5). Not only is PM2.5 dangerous to human health, but can also be composed of black carbon. Black carbon is a major contributor to greenhouse gases which worsen global warming.

California Climate Investments 2018 statewide program uses funding derived from the Cap-and-Trade Program to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, strengthen the economy, and improve public health and the environment—particularly in disadvantaged communities.

7. Question: *“Can I participate if I am a renter and not a homeowner?”*

Answer: The property owner needs to apply for the device change out in a rental unit.

8. Question: *“Can I swap my wood stove for a pellet stove under this program?”*

Answer: No. Although a pellet stove generates fewer GPH of PM, the pellets themselves have a multistep manufacturing process before they arrive at the local supply point. Any equipment which runs on fossil fuels, such as, chainsaws, transportation of material, and end product shipping, all generate exhaust which is another source of black carbon and greenhouse gas.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (cont.)



This grant is to support the **reduction** of greenhouse gases. Therefore, to use the funds to purchase a product that would generate greenhouse gases through the supply chain defeats the purpose of the mission and intent of this year's program.

9. Question: ***"Why are you giving \$500 more this year for the same type of change out last year?"***

Answer: A few reasons, this year's funds are over three times the typical amount for the Wood Stove Change-Out Program. This year's program is open to homeowners district-wide, allowing for exponentially more people to participate than in previous years. With most of the district jurisdiction being excluded from past year's programs, the decision was made to increase the discount amount as a way to generate interest in the program and maximize the number of wood stove change outs within all three counties.

10. Question: ***"What factors decide whether you qualify for this year's program?"***

Answer: In order to qualify for this year's Wood Stove Change Out Program you just need to own a home in one of the three counties in the Air District's jurisdiction (Monterey, Santa Cruz and San Benito) and use either a wood burning fireplace or a Non EPA certified wood burning insert or Non EPA Certified wood burning stove.

11. Question: ***"How can I tell if my wood stove is a Non EPA Certified wood stove?"***

Answer: EPA certified wood burning stoves are labeled on the back indicating EPA certification. You can also check the list of EPA Certified Wood Burning devices on this site:

<https://www.epa.gov/compliance/list-epa-certified-wood-stoves>

12. Question: ***"What is the difference between an EPA Certified and Non EPA Certified wood stove?"***

Answer: "Certified" means that a wood-burning appliance meets EPA clean air standards. It generates less smoke (fewer particulates) than a non-certified stove and uses less wood to create more heat. Only new stoves are certified. Certification takes place when the stove is manufactured.

13. Question: ***"How do I qualify for the low income additional discount?"***

Answer: The Air District provides income qualified applicants an additional discount to assist with their change-outs. Income is verified through Central Coast Energy Services (CCES) which determines whether the applicant is eligible for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Call CCES at 1-888-728-3637 to request an application. Return the completed CCES application to CCES for approval. <http://www.energyservices.org/index-afh.html>. CCES will notify us of those who qualify for low income and the additional discount will be added to your Pre-Qualification Voucher.

14. Question: ***"Does this discount cover the whole cost of a new stove?"***

Answer: The discounts typically do not cover the entire cost of a change-out. Total cost for an average change-out often falls in the \$3,500 to \$5,500 range depending on the specific project .



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (cont.)



15. Question: *“Why do you need my email address? / “What if I don’t have email (an email account)?”*

Answer: Emailing the vouchers is much faster than mailing. The assigned vouchers have a 35-day expiration date therefore, efficiency is important. The faster we can provide the voucher and program information to you the sooner a pre-installation estimate appointment can be made, etc. If you do not have an email account or do not wish to share it with us then we can fax or mail your information to you which will take a longer period of time to receive. The more time spent on air district administration costs means less money for wood-stove change-outs.

16. Question: *“If I share my email address, how do I know I won’t get spam from the Air District?”*

Answer: The Air District does not share your information. It is only used for the purposes of expediting the necessary Wood Stove Change-Out information to you so that we can serve as many people as possible with the funds provided in this year’s grant.

For more information go to our website at:

<http://mbard.org/programs-resources/planning/grants-incentives/wood-stovefireplace-grants/>

or call us at:

(831) 647-9411