



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NC 27711

JUN 19 2008

OFFICE OF  
AIR QUALITY PLANNING  
AND STANDARDS

Dan Johnson  
Executive Director  
WESTAR  
500 Union Street  
Seattle, Washington 98101

  
Dear Mr. Johnson:

Thank you for your letter of April 29, 2008, in which you urged the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to update and develop regulations relating to a variety of wood combustion devices. You expressed concern that current federal regulations are out of date and target limited types of wood burning sources, leaving a number of devices unregulated and contributing to high ambient concentrations of fine particles in many communities across the country.

We share your concern about wood smoke emissions and have started a review of the technical information that would be needed to revise the New Source Performance Standards (NSPS) for residential wood heaters.

As you know, EPA has worked for the past few years to address emissions from wood burning sources by supplementing the NSPS for residential wood heaters with strongly supported voluntary measures. We have worked with states, communities and industry to create the Great American Woodstove Changeout Program to provide incentives to replace older woodstoves with cleaner-burning technology. Since 2005, we have worked with over 30 communities to replace nearly 7,500 old wood stoves and fireplaces. This has resulted in a reduction of more than 200 tons of fine particle emissions per year and an estimated \$50 million per year of health benefits.

We also have worked with the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM) to develop a voluntary program which has facilitated the development of cleaner burning outdoor wood heaters faster than we could by developing a federal regulation. To date, 19 manufacturers have signed agreements to develop much cleaner units. Eight units have already been tested by EPA-accredited test laboratories to qualify at the Phase 1 emission level (70 percent cleaner), and two additional models have already qualified at the Phase 2 emission level (90 percent cleaner). We also

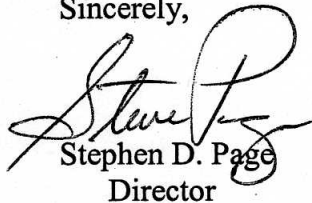
supported NESCAUM's development of a model rule that states can adopt to address emissions from these units. Several states have already adopted rules and many are in the midst of the regulatory development process.

We are working with industry on a similar partnership targeting low-mass fireplaces which will result in the manufacture of much cleaner fireplaces and should yield substantial reductions of wood smoke emissions. In addition, we are working with the industry and others to develop a burn smart campaign that will target new owners as well as existing owners of wood-burning devices. We believe that an education campaign promoting proper burn techniques can bring about significant improvements in air quality.

Your letter indicated a concern with small wood boilers being marketed to schools and hospitals and asked that we direct resources towards gathering technical information. We have started gathering such information to the extent our resources allow. We have a meeting with the U.S. Forest Service from July 22-24 in Washington, D.C. to share technical information about wood burning in small boilers, such as those used in schools. We welcome your participation. Please contact Karen Blanchard at (919) 541-5503 or [blanchard.karen@epa.gov](mailto:blanchard.karen@epa.gov) for additional information.

We are examining all options available to us to reduce wood smoke emissions, both regulatory and non-regulatory. We look forward to continuing to work with you in our efforts to comprehensively address wood smoke emissions.

Sincerely,



Stephen D. Page  
Director

Office of Air Quality Planning  
and Standards

cc: Rob Brenner  
Gregory A. Green