



FACTSHEET on the SOLID FUEL BURNING DOMESTIC APPLIANCE REGULATION

April 2017

On September 19th, 2016 the BC Government adopted a new Solid Fuel Burning Domestic Appliance Regulation (SFB DAR). The purpose of this fact sheet is to outline the requirements of the new regulation.

What has changed?

On September 19th, 2016 the BC Government adopted a new [Solid Fuel Burning Domestic Appliance Regulation](#). On November 1st, 2016 the previous [Solid Fuel Burning Domestic Appliance Regulation](#) that has been in place since 1994 will be repealed and replaced with the new SFB DAR. Table 1 of this factsheet compares the requirements of the new SFB DAR to the previous regulation.

What is the purpose of the new regulation?

Wood smoke from home heating is a significant source of fine particulate matter (PM) pollution in many BC communities. Studies in a number of BC communities show that wood smoke accounts for anywhere from a few percent to more than 50% of fine PM. Air quality monitoring conducted between 2011 and 2013 showed that four BC communities are [exceeding national air quality standards](#) for fine PM. In all four of these communities, wood smoke has been identified as a significant contributor to fine PM concentrations.

The main purpose of the SFB DAR is to ensure that **new** wood burning appliances sold in BC are as clean-burning as possible. The regulation requires nearly all wood burning appliances sold in BC to be certified to meet PM emissions standards set by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2015, or equivalent standards set by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) in 2010. The regulation also specifies what fuels may be burnt in solid fuel burning appliances, and has provisions around the sale and installation of outdoor wood boilers.

What is covered by the regulation?

The regulation applies to “appliances” which are defined in the regulation as devices designed to burn “solid fuel” for heating indoor spaces, cooking or aesthetic enjoyment. Certain devices are exempted from the definition of appliance. These include barbecues, chimineas, outdoor fireplaces and ovens, and solid fuel burning devices with output greater than 150 kilowatts. “Solid fuel” is defined in the regulation and includes untreated wood and wood products and wood pellets.

What are the main requirements of the regulation?

Many of the requirements of the regulation apply mainly to retailers and manufacturers of solid fuel burning appliances in BC. Following adoption of the new regulation, nearly all solid fuel burning appliances sold in BC will need to be certified to meet PM emission standards set by the EPA or the CSA. Retailers of these appliances will be required to keep records demonstrating that the appliances are certified. A separate factsheet will outline requirements for retailers. There are also requirements governing the sale and installation of outdoor wood boilers, and requirements for what fuels are allowed to be burned in appliances.

Is it still legal to use old wood stoves and fireplaces?

Yes. The new regulation does not affect existing wood stoves or fireplaces. You can continue to use these subject to any local bylaws. If you have an old woodstove or fireplace you may be able to save money and contribute to cleaner air by upgrading to a newer emissions certified appliance. Incentives for these upgrades may be available through the [BC Wood Stove Exchange Program](#).

What are the new rules for outdoor wood boilers?

Outdoor wood boilers (OWBs), also known as outdoor

wood-fired hydronic heaters, are wood burning appliances that are installed outside a home. An OWB heats water that runs through pipes and is then used to heat houses and other buildings. Outdoor wood boilers can be extremely smoky appliances, emitting 3x to more than 10x the smoke of a regular wood stove. The following requirements apply to OWBs.

- 1) Starting in March 1, 2017 only boilers that are certified to meet emissions standards set by the US EPA or the CSA are legal to sell in BC
- 2) Starting in May 1, 2017 only certified outdoor wood boilers are allowed to be installed anywhere in BC and they must be installed 40 metres from property lines
- 3) In the interim between Nov 1, 2016 and May 1, 2017 the following rules apply
 - a. Certified boilers can be installed 40 metres from property lines
 - b. Uncertified boilers can be installed if they are 80 metres from property lines
- 4) Pellet boilers, which burn more cleanly than wood boilers, only require a 10 metre setback from property lines.
- 5) Retailers of outdoor boilers will be required to inform purchasers of the installation requirements.
- 6) After November 1, 2026 it will no longer be legal to use uncertified outdoor wood boilers unless they have 80 or more metres setback from property lines.

What is legal to burn in wood stoves and other solid fuel burning appliances?

Solid fuel as defined in the regulation is legal to burn.

- 1) Untreated, seasoned wood or wood products including cordwood, wood chips, and ends from cutting lumber to length
- 2) Wood pellets and other pelletized biomass fuels
- 3) Manufactured fire logs
- 4) Corn kernels and seed hulls (only occasionally used in BC)

Paper and cardboard may be used for the purpose of starting fires.

What is not legal to burn in wood stoves and other wood burning appliances?

Anything not meeting the definition of solid fuel in the regulation is not legal to use for fuel. Specific examples of fuel that is not legal to burn would include:

- 1) Garbage
- 2) Plastics
- 3) Treated or painted wood
- 4) Demolition debris
- 5) Rubber
- 6) Unseasoned wood products

It is worth noting that, in addition to provincial law, many municipalities in BC have rules in place prohibiting the burning of materials such as garbage.

Compliance and Enforcement

Following adoption of the new SFB DAR, the initial focus of compliance and enforcement will be to educate retailers and manufacturers of appliances about the new requirements to encourage voluntary compliance.

The new SFB DAR enables a range of penalties for non-compliance including violation tickets and administrative penalties.

Anyone who observes or suspects a violation of the SFB DAR or another environmental law can contact:

24-hour RAPP (Report All Poachers and Polluters) tip-line:

1-877-952-7277 (Conservation Officer Service) or [online](#)

Environmental Complaints Line:

environmentalcomplaints@gov.bc.ca

Further Information

For further information consult the regulation itself as well as the document [Questions and Answers on the Solid Fuel Burning Domestic Appliance Regulation](#).

Note: *This information on the Solid Fuel Burning Domestic Appliance Regulation is solely for the convenience of the reader. The current legislation and regulations should be consulted for complete information.*

Table 1: Comparison of new SFB DAR (after Nov 1, 2016) and the previous regulation

Issue	Existing regulation	New SFB DAR
Emissions standards for wood and pellet stoves sold in BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particulate matter (PM) emissions must meet EPA standards from 1992. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Particulate matter (PM) emissions must meet new EPA standards from 2015 or equivalent CSA standards from 2010 which represent a 40% reduction from 1992 levels. In 2020 the levels will further reduce to 73% below the 1992 standards.
Emissions standards for wood burning boilers and furnaces sold in BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must meet stringent new PM emissions standards from the US EPA or equivalent standards from the CSA to be legally sold in BC. This prevents the sale of high emitting outdoor wood boilers in BC. It also creates a level playing field where nearly all wood burning appliances sold in BC will be required to be certified.
Exemptions from regulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad exemption for anything outside a relatively narrow appliance definition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appliance is defined broadly and only certain types of appliance are exempt. • Remaining exempted appliances are niche appliances that contribute little towards overall wood smoke emissions because of their relatively small numbers.
Acceptable fuels for solid fuel burning appliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined as wood and wood products, pellets, seed hulls, and firelogs. • Prevents the burning of unsuitable fuels that generate pollution such as plastics, treated wood, and garbage.
Requirements for outdoor wood boilers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only certified outdoor wood boilers can be sold in BC. • Retailers must inform customers of the installation requirements. • New wood boilers must be installed with 40 metre setbacks from property lines. • Cleaner burning outdoor pellet boilers only require a 10 metre setback. • Older non-certified boilers can't be used after November 1, 2026 unless they have adequate setbacks from property lines. • The outdoor boiler provisions will reduce pollution issues from this source by ensuring that future installations only happen on larger lots.
Requirements for domestic pellets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood pellets sold for domestic use in BC must meet quality standards defined in the regulation
Record keeping requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Records must be kept for two years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manufacturers and retailers of solid fuel burning appliances doing business in BC must retain records demonstrating that the appliances they sell meet the required standards. These records must be retained for five years.

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