



Media release 5/12/05

INVEST NOW AND AVOID A FINE

Want to avoid a \$3,300 fine caused by an overly smokey flue? Then buy \$200 worth of seasoned firewood and put your worries behind you say the Australian Home Heating Association.

There are many ways to run a wood heater without any smoke and one way is to buy your wood for next season now. Purchasing firewood in spring or summer is a good way to ensure the fuel you buy is going to burn well. Smokey flues are often caused by burning wet or green wood, so it makes sense to burn well seasoned firewood and avoid being the target of a council fine.

Firewood is usually cut 18 months prior to sale and left to dry before being sold. When trees are initially felled the wood contains about 50 per cent moisture which needs to evaporate in order to prevent excessive smoke. Moisture content of firewood should be in the range of 15-20 per cent. In some areas wood is sold by weight so it's advisable to know the moisture content as you don't want to be paying for water!

Once firewood is brought home it needs to be kept undercover in a dry ventilated area, and is best stacked in a crisscross fashion allowing air between the logs to circulate freely. Most heaters burn better with three or four smaller logs rather than one or two larger ones but be careful as overloading can cause increased smoke.

Upgrading your wood heater to a clean burning and highly efficient model will also prevent excessive smoke. Modern clean burning wood heaters are up to 80 per cent more efficient than older wood heaters and open brick fireplaces. Not only do they save on wood, but by using a new Australian Standards AS/4013 certified appliance you could also save yourself from a hefty fine.

Dark smouldering wood and a lot of smoke are signs of poor and incomplete burning so if people experience difficulty with their wood heater they can call the Australian Home Heating Association for some free advice.

- continues -

For further information or images contact Hannah Hempenstall, Media Officer, Australian Home Heating Association or visit www.homeheat.com.au.

6/26 Stirling Street, Thebarton, SA 5031
T: (08) 8351 9288 F: (08) 8351 9099

5 TIPS FOR BETTER BURNING

1. Burn only dry, well-seasoned wood.
2. Have your flue checked and cleaned every year.
3. Buy your firewood from a reputable supplier.
4. Store wood in a crisscross fashion and keep it undercover.
5. Purchase your wood early so it can air dry.

- ends -

For further information or images contact Hannah Hempenstall, Media Officer, Australian Home Heating Association or visit www.homeheat.com.au.

**6/26 Stirling Street, Thebarton, SA 5031
T: (08) 8351 9288 F: (08) 8351 9099**