

11-18-98

FACT SHEET

FINAL AMENDMENT TO STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE FOR NEW RESIDENTIAL WOOD HEATERS

TODAY'S ACTION.....

- ◆ The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is issuing a final amendment to the standard regulating particulate matter emissions from residential wood heaters manufactured after July 1, 1998. The final standard was issued in 1988.
- ◆ Residential wood heaters are typically small, wood burning appliances used for space heating in homes and other buildings. They are more commonly referred to as woodstoves. They can either be freestanding or inserted in fireplaces.
- ◆ Today's action is designed to prohibit sales to consumers of wood heaters which were certified based on an invalid original certification test, regardless of the reason for the invalid certification. The original wood heater rule limited this prohibition of sales only in the case of a fraudulent certification.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS?

- ◆ The amendment would have no direct health or environmental impact. The amendment does not change the regulatory requirements, but strengthens EPA's enforcement ability to ensure wood heaters that should not have been originally certified do not enter the marketplace.

WHAT DOES EPA'S FINAL AMENDMENT REQUIRE?

- ◆ The final amendment prohibits the sale of wood heaters to consumers, where the certificate was found to have been obtained with an invalid certification test. The amendment only allows sale of these wood heaters back to the manufacturer.

BACKGROUND

- ◆ The wood heater standard was finalized in February 26, 1988. Prior to certification, the rule requires wood heater manufacturers to test wood heater particulate emissions and submit the test results with an application for certification to the EPA.
- ◆ The rule contains a section on "Prohibitions" that list prohibited activities related to manufacturers and other commercial owners, and consumers. This list includes a prohibition on the sale of any wood heater which has a certification obtained through fraudulent acts.

- ◆ It was discovered in 1996, that several wood heater model lines had been certified with the results of fraudulent certification tests. The wood heaters involved were prohibited from sale by the dealers to consumers, as required by the rule, and were “recalled” by the manufacturers from the dealers.
- ◆ In reviewing this incident, EPA determined it would be environmentally prudent to expand this sales prohibition to wood heater model lines that should not have been certified in the first place based on a faulty or invalid certification test, regardless of whether or not fraud was involved.

WHO WILL BE AFFECTED BY THE FINAL AMENDMENT?

- ◆ The amendment could potentially affect any manufacturer or dealer of certified wood heaters. However, EPA believes the discovery of invalid certification tests will be rare, and that the impact, if any, will be minimal.

HOW MUCH WILL THE FINAL AMENDMENT COST?

- ◆ There should be no additional cost incurred in complying with the wood heater regulation. The amendment does not require a manufacturer do anything differently in meeting the rule. The only potential cost would be associated with a certification that was obtained with an invalid certification test.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION...

- ◆ Interested parties can download the Federal Register notice and final amendment from the EPA’s web site on the Internet under “recent actions” at the following address: <http://www.epa.gov/ttn/oarpg>. For further information about the amendment, contact Bob Marshall of EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance at (202) 564-7021.
- ◆ The EPA’s Office of Air and Radiation’s home page on the Internet contains a wide range of information on the air toxics program, as well as many other air pollution programs and issues. The Office of Air and Radiation’s home page address is: <http://www.epa.gov/oar/>