

## TIPS ON RESPONSIBLE RECREATIONAL BACKYARD FIRES

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### What we do know:

The mixture of gas and microscopic particles are the dangerous components of wood smoke as they can get into your respiratory system causing serious and lasting health issues.

This fine particulate matter can aggravate lung and other diseases and have been previously linked to premature death in individuals with existing conditions. It is advised that anyone suffering from diseases such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, emphysema, or asthma should steer clear of wood smoke in general.

### Children are vulnerable:

Children's respiratory systems are still developing. Meaning, they breathe more air (and thus air pollution) per pound of body weight than adults, so it is key that their exposure to wood smoke is limited.

### Avoid smoking out your neighbours:

Smoke from an open fire can seriously pollute your neighbourhood. This is especially true when burning takes place on calm days with no wind. The particles and gases produced can build to levels that are harmful for days. A haze may cover whole communities and reduce visibility. Closing doors and windows will not help. Smoke can easily waft through small cracks and holes, polluting your indoor air as well as the outdoor air.

### To burn or not to burn:

#### DO Burn:

Only use seasoned firewood and burn it in a way that promotes complete combustion. Small, hot fires are better than large smoldering ones as that will minimize the amount of harmful smoke.

#### Do NOT Burn:

Treated or painted lumber, lumber products containing glue or resin, wet or unseasoned wood, leaves or yard waste, garbage, rubber tires or plastic.

### Additional Fire Safety Tips to Consider:

- A fire pit or portable fire receptacle must be constructed of non-combustible materials and it must be either built into the ground or set upon non-combustible materials such as brick or stone.
- A fire pit must be at least 3 metres (10 feet) from any combustible buildings, structures, fences, trees, or overhead wires etc.
- All Fires must be attended to at all times by an adult over the age of 18 with an adequate supply of water, sand or other extinguishing material must be on hand.

**1 in 5 Manitobans suffer from some form of lung disease and 5 out of 5 Manitobans have lungs... Be sure to burn responsibly.**

#### References:

<https://www.lung.ca/lung-health/air-quality/outdoor-air-quality/residential-wood-burning>  
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/fire-pit-environmental-dangers/>  
[http://winnipeg.ca/fps/FirePrevention/Regulations/Open-Air\\_Fires.stm](http://winnipeg.ca/fps/FirePrevention/Regulations/Open-Air_Fires.stm)