

Light your fire the Burn Bright way

Does your chimney give off excess smoke when you are running your woodburner? If your chimney or flue is still smoking 15 minutes after lighting your fire, check the list of things below to see if they can help. The goal is to have minimal smoke going into the atmosphere.



- When preparing to light your fire leave a bed of ash, put scrunched newspaper in the bottom, add small bits of kindling, then add larger pieces of dry wood as fire catches hold.
- Light newspaper in several places. Have air control fully open to keep your fire burning brightly.
- Keep the door closed unless you are reloading.
- Never use the door to force wood into burner – it could break the glass.
- Look after your burner – follow the manufacturer's operation and safety instructions. Clean your flue every autumn and replace any damaged parts.
- Please note that burning things like wet wood, plastic, rubbish or treated wood, is banned. It can create toxic fumes and damage your burner.
- If you continue to have problems, you could have a faulty wood burner, your chimney may need cleaning or your wood may be damp.

How to light your fire



1

Leave a thin bed of ash in the bottom of the firebox



2

Use lots of well scrunched up newspaper as a base



3

Place several small pieces of dry, split kindling on top of the paper



4

Wait until the kindling is burning well before adding more wood



5

Don't damp the fire down until it is burning well



6

Go outside and check your chimney – you should see a heat haze but no smoke

For a video on how to light your fire the Burn Bright smoke-free way, go to:

nelson.govt.nz/burn-smoke-free

The importance of air quality

Air pollution is hard to escape, as it is all around us, and it affects everyone. That's why the government has set national environmental standards for air quality.

Globally, one third of deaths from stroke, lung cancer and heart disease are due to air pollution. Here in Aotearoa New Zealand, we know that more than 2,300 people die prematurely each year because of air pollution. People with lung damage or other underlying conditions are more susceptible to infections such as influenza or COVID-19 so clean air is especially important at this time.

Council's role in managing air quality

In Nelson, domestic woodburners are the largest contributor to air pollution in winter months. Council is required to monitor air quality and keep records, and to help people to understand how to achieve the best wood-burning practices so our air is kept cleaner and safer for everyone.

The National Environmental Standards for Air Quality (NESAQ) set the minimum requirements for air quality to protect human health and the environment. Through our monitoring and compliance role, Council can measure air pollution and enforce standards to protect everyone's health. PM10 is the main concern in Nelson, particularly during the winter period when cold, still conditions trap smoke emissions. PM10 is a measure of tiny, inhalable particles. Exposure to PM10 can have short and long-term health effects. You can find the latest monitoring results at:

lawa.org.nz/explore-data/nelson-region/air-quality

Smoke patrols underway

Council's smoke patrols are starting this month. If your fire smokes for more than 15 minutes after lighting you may receive a visit from a smoke patrol officer who will talk with you about how to light your fire the smoke-free way.

If you see excessive air pollution that doesn't look quite right, contact us at 0800 NO POLLUTE and we'll look into it for you.

Remember, no braziers in winter

To help with our efforts to keep our air clean, outdoor braziers are not allowed from May to August.

