

To the Chairs and Members of the CT Environment Committee

I am testifying in favor of a ban on outdoor wood furnaces and Senate Bill 830.

My name is Andrea Wieland, and I live at N7637 330th Street, Spring Valley, Wisconsin. My family and I are being adversely impacted by smoke from a neighbor's EPA-Qualified Phase II Outdoor Wood-fired Furnace (OWF).

The OWF is located approximately 850-feet east of my property line, and approximately 15-feet lower in elevation than my home. The OWF is located next to a steep hill on the south side, which funnels the smoke toward my property and prevents it from dispersing outside of the valley. During frequent morning inversions when there is no wind, the smoke from the OWF fills the valley as shown in the photo below. We can smell the smoke, which burns our eyes and lungs, causing us to cough. When the wind blows the smoke from the OWF toward our house, we smell it inside and outside our home.

The OWF smokes continuously for hours; especially in the morning after it has been filled with wood. This Phase II OWF replaced a non-qualified OWF, but creates as much visible smoke as the non-qualified OWF.



As shown in the photo above, the smoke can travel and remain at the breathing level at great distances from the OWF, especially when it is trapped in an inversion or valley.

This Phase II-qualified outdoor wood furnace comes with the following nuisance warning in the user's manual:

"Improper use or failure to maintain the hydronic heater may cause nuisance conditions. The person(s) operating a hydronic heater is/are responsible for operation in a manner that does not create a public or private nuisance condition. Meeting the distance and stack height recommendations from the manufacturer and requirements in applicable State and local regulations may not always be adequate to prevent nuisance conditions in some areas due to terrain or other factors." (That quote is from Central Boiler Maxim Model M250 owner's manual 2010 version).

Setback and stack height restrictions do not prevent nuisance conditions, as noted by the manufacturers in OWF user manuals. The smoke from the neighbor's OWF is a nuisance and prevents us from the use and enjoyment of our property. The smoke is a health hazard when we are forced to breathe it in our home and on our property.

The smoke affects our property value because it is a known hazard that we must disclose to buyers in the mandatory Wisconsin Real Estate Condition Report. This report requires sellers to disclose known "unusual odors" from and hazardous or toxic substances on neighboring properties, and defects caused by unsafe concentrations of, unsafe conditions relating to, or the storage of, hazardous or toxic substances on neighboring properties.

The EPA has given a perceived endorsement of Phase II OWFs in its interim voluntary program, in spite of relying on an unvetted emission testing method OWHH 28, and in spite of not regulating OWFs as federally mandated in the overdue Clean Air Act New Source Performance Standards for wood stoves.

Because of this **perceived** approval from EPA for Phase II OWFs, we have no support from our state or local environmental and public health regulatory agencies for relief from the smoke exposure. Wisconsin state regulatory agencies have told me that OWF emissions violate numerous state laws, but they do not want to shut down an entire industry.

The Wisconsin Health Department made the following statement about OWFs: "If there are visible emissions and odors at a neighboring residence(s), there is a completed exposure pathway and the potential for adverse health effects." In spite of this knowledge of fact, Wisconsin state regulators have chosen not to enforce existing laws to protect public health.

Due to the hazards that both phase I and phase II outdoor wood furnaces pose to neighbors, outdoor wood furnaces should be banned until safer technologies are found.

- Andrea Wieland

Date of Public Hearing: February 9, 2011