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NEWS RELEASE

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DEQ Urges Use of UtahAir App as Burning Rules Go Into Effect: Penalties Increase for First Violation

Seasonal wood burning restrictions begin November 1

Salt Lake City, Utah – With the air turning cold, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality's [Division of Air Quality](#) (DAQ) reminds Utahns that wood burning restrictions go into effect November 1, 2017, and urges the use of online and mobile tools for better monitoring of daily air particulates.

Starting this year, the fines for burning wood on mandatory action days have increased to \$150 for the first violation of the burning restrictions and additional violations will be subject to penalties of \$299. The penalties reflect the need to address the levels of air pollution that wood stoves contribute in light of the reclassification of the Wasatch Front counties as "Serious" non-attainment areas for fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}).

Wood burning restrictions aim to help reduce hard-to-see particle pollution that builds up during winter inversion periods. Restrictions are implemented as a proactive measure when fine particle matter (PM 2.5) has the potential to reach unhealthy levels from emission sources such as vehicles, as well as wood and coal burning fireplaces or stoves.

Salt Lake County has implemented mandatory burn restrictions on days when DAQ is calling for voluntary action.

The DAQ air quality alert system, developed with input from the public, aims to better communicate the complex health implications and activity restrictions related to air pollution. A phone app, UtahAir, that employs DAQ's air quality alert system is now available for both Android and iOS users at <http://www.airquality.utah.gov/aqp/currentconditions.php>. App users will receive burn-ban alerts and three-day forecasts to help plan the best times to exercise outdoors, or when to make consolidated trip for errands based on current conditions.

"The UtahAir app is our most popular tool because Utahns can quickly click on the information they need at anytime and anywhere," said Bryce Bird, director of DAQ. "This is important information people can access in order to make daily decisions that will improve air quality during the upcoming winter inversion season."

The DAQ's [alert system](#) consists of two parts:

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Part 1—Action Alerts: Three basic symbols to indicate unrestricted, voluntary and mandatory actions.

- Unrestricted Action (symbol = circle): Wood and coal burning stoves or fireplaces may be used, but please use them in a proper manner to reduce smoke emissions.
- Voluntary Action (symbol = inverted triangle): Voluntarily do not use wood and coal burning stoves or fireplaces. Reduce vehicle use by consolidating trips. Industry should optimize operating conditions to minimize air pollution emissions.
- Mandatory Action (symbol = X): Wood and coal burning stoves or fireplaces must not be used. Reduce vehicle use by consolidating trips. Industry should optimize operating conditions to minimize air pollution emissions.

When mandatory restrictions are in place the use of solid fuel appliances may result in penalties ranging up to \$299 per day. If violations of the burning restrictions are observed by the public, they should be reported to DAQ by calling 801-536-4000 during business hours or by filling out a simple form online at: airquality.utah.gov/Compliance/complaint.htm.

Part 2—Health Guidance: The EPA’s national standard [Air Quality Index](#) (AQI), which is divided into six, color-coded categories that correspond to different levels of pollution and related guidance for individuals with health concerns.

The DAQ monitors air pollution hourly and provides a three-day “action forecast” on its website (airquality.utah.gov) to help residents plan ahead and adjust their activities during periods of winter inversion. For more information on air quality and health, visit:

<http://health.utah.gov/asthma/airquality/health.html>

<http://health.utah.gov/utahair/AQI/>

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About DEQ

Established in 1991, the Utah Department of Environmental Quality’s (DEQ) mission is to safeguard public health and quality of life by protecting and enhancing the environment. DEQ implements state and federal environmental laws and works with individuals, community groups and businesses to protect the quality of Utah’s air, land and water. For more information, visit www.deq.utah.gov, follow DEQ on Facebook ([utahdeq](#)) and Twitter ([UtahDEQ](#)), or call 1-800-458-0145.