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### **Garbage Burning Now Banned Statewide**

**SACRAMENTO** Beginning January 1, 2004, outdoor residential waste burning will no longer be allowed. The California Air Resources Board's (ARB) measure addresses one of the state's largest uncontrolled sources of dioxin, a compound identified as a toxic air contaminant by the state and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA).

"We are capping an emissions source that is not generally recognized by the public," said ARB Chairman, Dr. Alan Lloyd. "Whenever garbage is burned, be it junk mail, food containers or gift-wrapping paper, toxic compounds and particulate matter are dispersed. These emissions can adversely affect the health of people who breathe them or subsequently ingest them after they enter the food chain through the soil and water," he added.

Residential waste burning is a serious health concern because it produces toxic pollutants that can linger in the environment and our bodies. These emissions can potentially cause respiratory ailments, cancer, immune system damage and other health problems. One pollutant of particular concern, dioxin, is especially damaging to infants, children, the elderly and infirm, according to the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment and U.S. EPA.

Provisions for the measure, adopted by the ARB in 2002, include:

- Eliminating outdoor residential burning of all household waste except vegetation.
- Eliminating the use of burn barrels because they facilitate the illegal burning of waste materials.
- Providing exemptions in areas with very low population density that lack alternatives for waste disposal and
- Requiring all approved residential burning to take place on a day authorized for burning by local air districts.

Many areas of the state already ban residential waste burning. With an approved exemption, some sparsely populated areas of the state may burn cardboard and paper waste, and provide for the use of burn barrels or backyard incinerators. Exemptions for such activities are few, however.

Local air districts will play a prominent role in the implementation and enforcement of the measure. Residents with questions about how the measure will affect them should contact their local air district for information.

For more information about the measure, and who to contact in your area, [click here](#).

*The Air Resources Board is a department of the California Environmental Protection Agency. ARB's mission is to promote and protect public health, welfare, and ecological resources through effective reduction of air pollutants while recognizing and considering effects on the economy. The ARB oversees all air pollution control efforts in California to attain and maintain health based air quality standards.*

**The energy challenge facing California is real. Every Californian needs to take immediate action to reduce energy consumption. For a list of simple ways you can reduce demand and cut your energy cost, see our website at <http://www.arb.ca.gov>.**

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