Before installing a new heating system, you need to ensure your home retains the heat you put into it. Put together a heating package including:

- Insulating ceilings, walls and floors where possible
- Sealing off draughts
- Effective window coverings
- Zoning living and sleeping areas
- Choose an appropriate heating system for your home and use it wisely and efficiently.


Never burn household rubbish, driftwood or painted wood. Most old painted wood is likely to contain lead-based paint, and when burnt can produce poisonous gases.

Check your wood is dry by tapping it with a coin.
Dry wood makes a sharp resonant sound, wet wood makes a dull sound. Freshly cut wood needs to be stored under cover in a dry, ventilated area for eight to twelve months before use. Green or unseasoned wood contains up to 70% water, which causes smoke, not heat and costs you money.

Make sure your fire has enough air.
Open the air controls fully for 5 minutes before and 15 to 20 minutes after loading the heater. Stack wood loosely in your firebox, so plenty of air circulates around it. That way your fire will burn hot and efficiently, rather than smoulder, which causes smoke and air pollution.

Don’t let your fire smoulder overnight.
In winter, the highest concentrations of fine particles in the air occur after midnight caused by smouldering heaters overnight.

Get your flue checked and cleaned at least once a year by a professional.
Wood smoke pollution affects everyone. Even in small amounts, wood smoke pollutants can be harmful especially to the young, frail or elderly.

What can you do to protect yourself?

- Avoid outdoor physical activities
- Stay indoors with windows and external doors closed
- If you suffer from heart or lung disease and you notice symptoms of smoke exposure, take your regular medications, rest and seek medical advice if symptoms persist.

Wood smoke is produced from burning solid fuel in a wood heater or open fireplace. Wood is a natural material, but when it’s burned, it produces harmful particle pollution and noxious gases, which go deep into the lungs.

Smoke from wood heaters is a major cause of air pollution. In many areas in NSW in winter wood smoke contributes more than 60% of fine particle pollution.

If you can smell wood smoke, you’re breathing it in and in winter it can hang around for days at a time, having severe impacts on health.

On cold winter days (when people tend to burn wood) weather conditions create temperature inversions that put a lid over the lower atmosphere, trapping hazardous pollutants close to ground level.

There are other pollution sources, but wood burning occurs right in the neighbourhood where we live.

**What is wood smoke?**

Wood smoke is produced from burning solid fuel in a wood heater or open fireplace. Wood is a natural material, but when it’s burned, it produces harmful particle pollution and noxious gases, which go deep into the lungs.

**Who is most affected?**

Wood smoke pollution affects everyone. Even in small amounts, wood smoke pollutants can be harmful especially to the young, frail or elderly.

**What’s the problem?**

Smoke from wood heaters is a major cause of air pollution. In many areas in NSW in winter wood smoke contributes more than 60% of fine particle pollution.

**Wood smoke myth busters**

**Myth**

Wood Smoke is natural so it must be OK.

**Busted!**

If you can smell wood smoke, you’re breathing it in and in winter it can hang around for days at a time, having severe impacts on health.

**Myth**

Wood smoke rises, so it is not a problem.

**Busted!**

On cold winter days (when people tend to burn wood) weather conditions create temperature inversions that put a lid over the lower atmosphere, trapping hazardous pollutants close to ground level.

**Myth**

There are more important pollution sources to worry about.

**Busted!**

There are other pollution sources, but wood burning occurs right in the neighbourhood where we live.

**IF YOU CAN SMELL IT YOU’RE ALREADY BREATHING IT**