



Robyn Parker MP

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Heritage

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 20 March 2013

WOOD SMOKE PROGRAM AIMS TO HELP CLEAR THE WINTER AIR

Up to \$60,000 is being made available to NSW councils from total funding of about \$590,000 under the Wood Smoke Reduction Program in 2013, Environment Minister Robyn Parker said today.

Ms Parker said selected councils throughout NSW would receive grants to run the program in their areas, including in metropolitan, tableland, western, south-western and Hunter Valley areas.

The councils are:

Armidale	Deniliquin	Port Macquarie-Hastings
Bathurst	Dubbo	Riverina East ROC
Blacktown	Holroyd	Singleton
Camden	Lithgow	Warrumbungle
Campbelltown	Maitland	Wollongong
Cooma-Monaro	Muswellbrook	

“This winter the councils will use their grant funding to assist local communities to reduce the amount of smoke produced by burning wood for heating,” Ms Parker said.

The Wood Smoke Reduction Program, run by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), supports councils to make local decisions to reduce wood smoke including:

- Offering cash incentives to owners of old, polluting wood heaters and fireplaces to shift to cleaner alternatives;
- Carrying out community education about the health effects of wood smoke and the benefits of correct wood heater operation; and
- Conducting smoky chimney surveys with local enforcement.

Ms Parker said that the EPA’s Air Emissions Inventory shows that in Sydney the largest source of particle pollution in winter is wood heaters.

“Reducing wood smoke through the grants program will improve the health of the local community, especially that of small children, frail older people and asthmatics,” Ms Parker said.

“For these people, air pollution may cause discomfort, limit activities, increase use of medications and lead to frequent visits to doctors.”

Ms Parker said councils had shown a keen interest in the program.

“Competition was strong for the funding and we have tried to give priority to councils that showed they have a significant local wood smoke problem and a firm desire to do something about it,” Ms Parker said.

“With this popular program for councils we are turning into action the Government’s *NSW 2021* targets of protecting local environments from pollution and providing information to local communities on air quality.”

Ms Parker said there are some important but relatively easy steps owners can take to reduce smoke from wood heaters including:

- using only dry seasoned wood;
- not overloading the heater; and
- not letting the heater smoulder, especially overnight.

Details of the successful councils and their proposals under the program:

Council	Grant (\$)	Program Options		
		Community Education	Smokey Chimney Surveys	Cash Incentives
Armidale	50,000	X	X	X
Bathurst	52,458	X	X	
Blacktown	50,000	X		X
Camden	59,996	X	X	X
Campbelltown	35,000	X		X
Cooma-Monaro	10,000	X		
Deniliquin	20,000	X		
Dubbo	60,000	X		X
Holroyd	20,000	X	X	
Lithgow	20,000		X	X
Maitland	6,000	X		
Muswellbrook	40,000	X	X	X
Port Macquarie-Hastings	40,000	X	X	X
Riverina East ROC	100,000	X	X	
Singleton	5,000	X		
Warrumbungle	5,000		X	
Wollongong	16,000	X		

Read more about wood heaters and the Air Emissions Inventory:

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/woodsmoke/index.htm>

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