

Press Release No. 50/2010

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Less pollution from fireplaces and tiled stoves

Updated UBA brochure on wood-fired heating with information on new regulations and low-emissions operation

Winter evenings in front of the fireplace are becoming more and more popular, yet fireplaces can also emit air pollutants that damage health. Users who follow some key rules and use only tested units can minimise health risks and do their bit for the environment, too. New laws aimed at reducing pollutant emissions from fireplaces and tiled stoves have been in force since March 2010.

The updated Federal Environment Agency (UBA) brochure entitled *Heizen mit Holz – ein Ratgeber zum richtigen und sauberen Heizen* provides information on the new regulations as well as on the clean operation of wood stoves or small wood-fired boilers.

Several factors are key in the choice of a firing installation and proper operation:

Firstly, choice of fuel and storage. Only dry natural wood may be used. Treated or coated wood is just as unsuitable as are self-made paper briquets. The new ordinance on small and mid-sized firing installations, or *1st BlmSchV*, features a list of allowable fuels and sets a cap on the humidity content of the wood. The latter is important as the use of damp wood not only decreases the efficiency of the system, it also increases pollutant emissions.

Secondly, the stove or boiler itself has a direct impact on emissions. Stoves that are used to heat one room only are subject to new limit values for type approval. This test must be carried out by manufacturers before the unit is put on the market. No further measurements are required in these systems after installation and activation. Consumers should make sure to obtain a certificate of compliance with these requirements upon purchase, which must then be shown to the chimney sweep.

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Boilers that supply heat to entire flats or houses must comply with new limit values which are regularly monitored by chimney sweeps. The system itself is not necessarily to blame if a chimney smokes. Particularly in ordinary units, operators play a great role in steering pollutant emissions as choice of fuel, start-up, fuel amount, and proper adjustment of air inlet are crucial to low-emissions operation. Useful information in this regard is also in the UBA brochure.

The *Heizen mit Holz [Heating with Wood]* manual (in German) is available free of charge by phone order (local call charge): 01888/305-3355, by fax (local call charge): 01888/305-3356, by email: uba@broschuerenversand.de or via Internet: www.uba.de/uba-info-medien-e/3151.html. Download is free.

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