

From: jkapura@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, December 31, 2009 11:45 AM
To: EP, RegComments
Subject: Proposed Rulemaking outdoor wood fired boilers 25 PA. Code CHS. 121 and 123

Dec. 31, 2009

RE: Proposed Rulemaking : Outdoor Wood Fired Boilers: 25 PA Code CHS. 121 and 123

Dear Members of the Board,

I am writing in regard to the proposed rule making for outdoor wood fired boilers.

As a homeowner, I can not express enough the need for state wide restrictions on these boilers. The day after I finished painting the trim on my new garage, three years ago, my neighbor fired his wood burner for the first time. Immediately, the entire neighborhood was engulfed with smoke and little has changed since. I literally have become a prisoner in my own home. I can not open windows anytime of the year for fear of the house being filled with smoke. This has happened on several occasions, when having left the second story windows open, I have come home to a house full of smoke. All summer I have to live in fear of this happening. When I am home and he decides to fire his boiler, just to burn trash, I have to go running and close windows. This leaves me feeling like a dog in a hot car when this happens. Last spring, on a beautiful evening, I was dozing on my sofa only to be awakened, unable to breath and running in a stupor to close windows from a horrid stench. I was on the verge of calling 911 just to get oxygen as my throat and sinuses started to swell shut. I found out the next day the neighbor was doing some remodeling work and decided to burn construction debris which not only included vinyl window frames, but plastic paneling. Sadly, although I used lifetime warranted paint, after three years my garage already needs repainted. The trim is no longer white, but a sooty dirty gray.

Please understand that this smoke still pervades the house even with the windows closed. My windows are all newer windows. Most of them are approximately twelve years old and several newer. Moreover, they are all energy efficient and yet this fine soot and stench seep in between the sashes. I have also noticed that the smoke/soot seeps in through bathroom fan vents and even the dryer vent. As such I can't leave clothes in the dryer or they need to be rewashed. Additionally, my furnace is located next to the first floor bath. Because the smoke seeps in through the vents, the furnace often picks the smoke up and blows it through the house. Many nights I have awaked in panic thinking the house is on fire. I can only imagine how much soot has come in through the attic vents and settled on the new insulation. I do know that even just having ridge vents in my garage still allows the attic space in there to fill with the smoke and stench. Because of this I must be very careful and store items only in sealed containers.

The smoke coming in through vents is bad enough, but when someone comes to your door, try dragging them in as quickly as possible so as to minimize the smoke from entering the house. It doesn't matter if it is the front door, back door, or garage door, I have to quickly enter/exit the house. Typically I have to get in the car then open the garage door just to minimize the smoke impact on my clothes. This also becomes a difficult task when my dog needs to go out. I have motion detector lights on the garage and have left the dog out at night only to see the smoke so bad that the beams of light are visible through the smoke. As I can not control when my dog needs to go out, I can only imagine the ill effects on his health.

Not only does the smoke lay in my yard, but it follows across the state road in front of my house (SR 982) often covering the road and the pasture across it like a blanket of fog. Its a shame the cows have to breath these toxins all day everyday. I guess we're eating them when they end up in the butcher shop. Moreover, I am amazed that a serious accident hasn't occurred because of how thick the smoke gets at times. I have called the state police on occasion because of this nuisance. I pray no one else installs a unit in town and hope that, if they do, that we never have an air inversion that kills people from the dangerous air quality. I also pray that when I see the sparks flying from the smoke stack on the neighbors unit that they don't ignite the wood and coal he has stored right next to the burner. With the right wind conditions I could see this whole town going up in flames as nearly every home is wood framed.

Please understand this smoke isn't a nice campfire smell. It is a putrid stench, nearly palpable like acid. It burns my nose, swells my throat, leaves me short of breath at times and has also caused me severe headaches. Much of this depends on what he is burning. Although we have local ordinances on burning wood or coal only, when no one is watching, only he and God know what goes in there. I have seen him burn plastic, household trash, construction debris,

green wood, plywood and any other combustible material lying around. Typically the illegal elements are usually burned on evenings/nights and weekends when the ordinance officer and twp. supervisors are off duty.

Like most any homeowner, I have invested tens of thousands of dollars in my home. Unfortunately, not only has it become nearly impossible to enjoy my home, but I can not enjoy my garden either. I am seriously concerned about toxins from his unit contaminating the ground and as such seeping into my skin when I garden as well as poisoning my vegetables. This may seem a bit far fetched, but unless you live near a burner like this one, you can not imagine the ill effects on your health. I never thought at 42 I would develop allergies to smoke. When I have tried (in a friendly manner) to reason with my neighbor he walks away and refuses to listen. I am seriously considering moving, however, I don't want to take this action as this was my grandparents home. Moreover, am sure I can never get my investment out of the house because of what the actions of one person have done. Additionally, without restrictions, I can not live anywhere and be safe from the ill effects of one of these units.

I pray this board take seriously the points I have laid out in this letter and further move to enact legislation to provide a fair, happy and balanced life for ALL persons in this Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Joseph M. Kapura
2661 SR 982
P.O. Box 28
Mammoth, PA 15664