

2802

RECEIVED
1766 Banning Road
Dawson, PA 15479

2010 JAN 12 PM 2:54

RECEIVED

JAN - 5 2010

December 30, 2009

Environmental Quality Board
PO Box 8477
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8477

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY BOARD

To Whom It May Concern:

I recently became aware of a push to regulate the use of outdoor, wood burning furnaces in our state. Having just purchased one of these units, I wanted to share some of my feelings with you regarding the potential regulations.

First and foremost I must admit to you that my motivation for installing an outdoor furnace was only to secure an affordable heat source for my home. My home had previously been heated with propane. For the past three years since moving into this house I have seen the prices for this fuel range from \$1.89 to \$3.10 per gallon. My monthly consumption for this fuel averages just below 400 gallons every month that the temperatures dip below 30 degrees. I have been fortunate that we were able to keep our propane tank filled for the past winters and maintain a comfortable 66 degrees but last year was the awakening for me. With speculation that fuel prices were possibly going to surpass \$5.00 per gallon it was clear that there was no way that we could continue to heat our house. Over the past three winters I have spent more than \$11,000.00 dollars on propane.

My home is situated on 33 acres of woodlands, a naturally renewable fuel that I owned. I do not have the earning potential that would allow me to be at the mercy of the commodities speculators in Wall Street. I had no choice but to install a heating system that would enable me to use the fuel, which I possess. That fuel is wood.

I purchased a unit that had met two criteria. The unit would be capable of using both wood and coal, since our state has an abundance of coal, and the unit was manufactured in Pennsylvania. My house is now comfortable and I am in control of the price of fuel that is consumed.

This decision to make this purchase was not reached lightly. The cost of my unit was \$7,200.00. The installation cost for materials approached \$1,000.00. There is a considerable amount of work that goes into keeping this outdoor furnace fired daily but at least I can sleep at night knowing that as long as my hands work I can keep my family warm. I burn wood but do supplement with coal for more heat.

I am aware that some people who have purchased these outdoor furnaces believe that since they are "outdoors" that any fuel can be burned. Namely tires and creosote containing fuels such as railroad ties and telephone poles. These fuels should be restricted. They are a public nuisance.

I live in the country and have no neighbors however my unit is within 60 feet of a boundary with PA Game Commission Property. Property boundary limitations for furnace installation should be left to the discretion of local governing authorities. The boundary limitations included within your proposal would severely limit the ability of Pennsylvania residents to choose this type of heat source.

The extended chimney standards are unrealistic and impractical. Very few residents have the available space that could accommodate the necessary support system to make this requirement feasible.

The idea for "Seasonal Use" of outdoor furnaces is not entirely without merit but that also is a matter for the local authorities also.

I believe that people who choose to use this type of furnace did not do so for any other reason than an opportunity to have an alternative to ever rising, uncontrollable costs for heating. I also believe that too

January 1, 2010

much regulation over the use of these units will significantly disadvantage the current and future owners of these alternative heat sources.

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert L. Prah". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "R".

Robert L. Prah