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From: ncare [ncare@ptd.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 10, 2010 1:46 PM
To: Hoyle, Susan; EP, RegComments
Subject: OWB Air Pollution Control Act 25pa code, chapter 123

INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Environmental Quality Board & Susan Hoyle Comment to Outdoor Wood Fired Boilers Air Pollution Control Act 25 pa, code 123/ 2802-7444,

Dear To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of the impending legislature to regulate the use of Outdoor Wood Fired Boilers. As a citizen of the state of PA I believe it is ludicrous to allow the uncontrolled use of the OWB devises. From my research into these devises, each unit produces the equivalent pollution of 205 oil furnaces or 8000 natural gas furnaces. In the area where I live in NE PA, it appears that the homes that are heated with these devises, which cost an average \$8000.00 to \$18,000.00 dollars are larger size affluent homes. I have yet to see small homes using these devises, for I would probably have more compassion for those on a fixed income or near the poverty level resorting to use these devises to heat their homes. Many of my neighborhood OWBs are used year round to heat the home owner's in ground swimming pool as well as heating their large homes. My township supervisors are avoiding dealing with suggested county legislation pertaining to OWBs because they feel they are understaffed to deal with inspections, and feel that the owners of these devises, and those installing them, will follow the manufacturer's recommendations. I would like to bring to your attention two situations that exist within my immediate community where those installing these devises have not followed common sense or recommendations.

1. An OWB is installed within 20 feet of a road in my township, and in the front yard of a 3000 square foot bi level home with in ground pool. The OWB has a 8 foot stack. The owner burns wet wood or allows the unit to smolder so that a cloud of smoke regularly hovers across the road, making visibility dangerous when driving through it, especially since a school bus stop exists about 100 feet beyond the OWB. Besides the danger of limited visibility, the smoke permeates into the car, lasting for a mile or two until the car's ventilation clears it out. The general wind direction travels in one direction from the OWB, and that is across the road, and lingering in the front yard of the house across the street. That house is two stories in height, and with the 8 foot stack on the OWB, the smoke cannot rise above that house and settles in the yard and against the house.

Inside the house lives a paraplegic gentleman, who used to travel up and down the road in his wheel chair. Since the neighbor installed the OWB, he no longer travels outside, for I am sure that if he inhales any of the smoke from the OWB, he is unable to cough it from his lungs. If common sense or love thy neighbor principals are enough to make one neighbor considerate of the other's needs, than there would be no problem.

Unfortunately, many people feel that they can do what they please on their own property, and this situation continues to occur. Is the paraplegic man going to the hospital more often as a result of the neighbor's devise, I can only surmise. Is it going to cost all of us more in increased health care and productivity lost as a result of someone wanting to heat their pool to a nice warm 80 degrees, I will bet my home on that.

2. The second situation hits closer to home for me. My direct neighbor behind me installed a OWB to heat his 2500 sq foot house and in ground swimming pool. He built a 2 story garage and placed the OWB just inside the property line behind the garage. The OWB has a 8 foot stack, and as a result, the smoke produced from his OWB flows to my property, because his garage acts as a wall so that he does not have to deal with the smoke. We have trees that separate the property, and which tend to break the wind flow and allows the smoke to linger.

The smoke surrounds our house in the winter, and is often worst when the humidity level is high, appearing like a fog in the yard. I can smell it in my house, and have often thought my own house was on fire when I smelled the smoke. My neighbor uses the OWB in the summer to heat his pool, forcing us into our house to escape his smoke. When inhaling the smoke, my lungs are irritated for days afterwards, resulting in a dry hack cough. I am not a cigarette smoking and do not burn wood for heat for health reasons. My husband is a senior citizen. I have talked to my neighbor in regards to the smoke and raising the smoke pipe, to no avail. The sad situation is that my neighbor is a state policeman, who took an oath to serve and obey, but apparently believes he is above common consideration. He and his father own an OWB sales business, so he must be aware of the controversies of these devises, but doesn't care about the impact to the neighbors and environment. His wife works for the state DEP, so if voluntary consideration and reasoning can not influence their personal financial benefit, then why is it expected that the "common folk" will voluntarily comply.

I realize that these devises are not going to go away, but need regulation. I should not lose my freedom to enjoy a home of 23 years for a neighbor wanting to cut heating costs. There are options such as solar and wind energy that the state should be encouraging people to install, rather than condoning the easy use of burning wood. Wood that may be treated with chemicals, that when bought in from outside areas may be bringing insects and diseases into an area, and which is ultimately encouraging people to cut down more trees, which are the lungs of our planet. And what of my health, should I get asthma or cancer? Who will pay my doctor's bill? Or who will pay for the trees in my yard that my suffer die back from the constant smoke exposure, or who will clean my home's windows and siding from the build up of smoke resin? Can we afford tying up the courts with continued litigation between neighbors? A vote to support the Air Pollution Control Act will show that Pennsylvania is concerned about its environment and impact on the planet!

K. Dempsey
Monroe County, PA