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**Chambers, Laura M.**

**From:** Travis Ferry [travisf@woodmode.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, November 06, 2009 3:28 PM  
**To:** EP, RegComments  
**Cc:** Harris, Adam; 'russ@russfairchild.com'  
**Subject:** Wood-Fired Boilers

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

Dear Sirs:

My family lives in a large farmhouse in rural Juniata County. Until approximately two years ago we heated our home with a traditional oil fired boiler. We maximized boiler efficiency with regular maintenance and reduced heat loss and cold air infiltration through extensive renovation and remodeling where we added fiberglass insulation to all exterior walls and to both 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor ceilings of our home and replaced approximately 30 old windows with more efficient double-pane models. Our average yearly consumption of fuel oil was still between 1400-1700 gallons and with the escalating price per gallon we needed to find an affordable home heating alternative. In November of 2007 we installed a wood-fired boiler and have reduced our yearly fuel oil consumption by 1200-1500 gallons. The oil we now use is typically for heating domestic hot water through the warm summer months.

We own a small farm and do not have "next-door" neighbors, during the installation process we were still mindful of our close neighbors and any effects the smoke from our unit may have had on them. Additionally, we located the unit to minimize the effects of smoke from the unit on our own family. We talked with our neighbors ahead of time and included their concerns in our decision making. That's what responsible people do. There have been many other installations of similar units throughout our community over the past few years and most installers are considerate of their neighbors. We have had no complaints from our neighbors and we really don't need additional regulations at the state level to intrude on our rights as property owners. The vast majority of people are responsible and considerate when completing this type of project. Local authorities are better prepared to deal with those cases that negatively affect local residents. I ask that the state not adopt cookie-cutter legislation that does not allow for the many varying types of installations and sets of circumstances that exist throughout the state.

I'd like to point out some positive side effects of wood fired boilers that should be considered as you hear testimony on this subject. First, anyone who installs a wood fired boiler in lieu of a traditional oil fired boiler is consuming a renewable fuel source in lieu of a non-renewable fuel. Secondly, the conservation of non-renewable fuels can be significant; in our case, by the end of this heating season we will have conserved about 3500-4500 gallons of fuel oil since installing our unit. Third, the money we saved on heating oil has been reinvested in our community in the form of home improvements, major appliance purchases and entertainment expenses. Many of these expenditures would not have been possible without the yearly fuel savings we have experienced. A fourth benefit of using a wood fired boiler is the consumption of waste woods; in my case I burn a large quantity of scraps from a local pallet manufacturer, in the past these scraps were either burned in an open pit or sent to a landfill. Another benefit is the reduction of deadfalls and damaged trees in our local wood lots, as these sources are tapped for firewood it improves the appearance of the land and removes potential fuel from the forest floor thus reducing the chance and spread of forest fires. Persons who hand-fire these units also have increased levels of physical activity from gathering, stacking and splitting wood and should experience some degree of improved physical conditioning.

The only area where I would encourage any state or federal legislation regarding wood fired boilers is at the

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manufacturer level where minimum efficiency and emissions standard should be set. Any and all existing installations should be exempt from any new legislation.

In conclusion, I discourage any state legislation that negatively impacts this move to energy independence or adds additional costs to installations, maintenance and operation of wood fired boilers. As a property owner I encourage our representatives in Harrisburg to respect our individual property rights and leave any installation legislation or ordinances to the local authorities.

Thank you for taking time to include and consider my remarks in the process,

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