

NEWS RELEASE

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New Program Offers Rebates to Help Replace Old Woodstoves

Today, the Regional Air Pollution Control Agency (RAPCA) kicked-off the Greater Dayton Woodstove Changeout Program which will offer "Clean Air Coupons" or instant rebates to encourage people to replace their old woodstoves and fireplace inserts with cleaner burning versions before next winter. The Greater Dayton Woodstove Changeout program is partnership between RAPCA, Cargill, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA), the Hearth, Patio and Barbeque Association and the Chimney Safety Institute of America and is part of U.S. EPA's Great American Woodstove Changeout campaign.

For six weeks, beginning July 15, RAPCA will provide Clean Air Coupons to help area residents replace their old woodstoves with new, cleaner-burning gas, pellet or corn stoves, or with woodstoves or fireplace inserts certified by the U.S. EPA. Residents can use the coupons for significant instant rebates at participating woodstove retailers. RAPCA is focusing on woodstove changeouts because of the serious health risks wood smoke poses.

"There are as many as 20,000 inefficient woodstoves in Greater Dayton," said John Paul, RAPCA supervisor. "If we replace just *one percent* of them, we remove 10 tons of particulate matter from the air. But we want to do much better

than that. With the help of corporate contributors, we can make a real difference in the air quality of Greater Dayton.”

“This changeout program is important because wood stoves and fireplace inserts made before 1992 are a significant source of fine particle pollution,” said Norm Niedergang, acting deputy administrator of EPA Region 5, headquartered in Chicago. “Fine particles can aggravate respiratory problems such as asthma and bronchitis, as well as cardio-pulmonary diseases such as congestive heart failure and coronary artery disease.”

But there are other benefits as well: new appliances are more efficient, which saves on heating costs; and they can be significantly safer.

The Clean Air Coupons will be worth \$300 toward pellet, corn and EPA-certified woodstoves and fireplace inserts, and \$400 toward gas stoves. Additional discounts may be available from retailers and manufacturers. Coupons are available to homeowners in RAPCA’s jurisdiction – Clark, Darke, Greene, Miami, Montgomery and Preble counties – and are currently using a pre-1992 woodburning stove or fireplace insert to heat their home. Program participants must also agree to have the woodstove professionally installed and have the old stove removed and destroyed – so they don’t continue to contribute to pollution.

“If we could replace every pre-1992 wood stove and fireplace insert in the six-county Dayton area with an EPA-certified, cleaner-burning model, we could reduce fine particle pollution in greater Dayton by about 2 percent,” Niedergang said. “That may not sound like much, but according to EPA experts in this field, just that small reduction could mean an estimated \$100 million in health benefits in 2008 alone.”

Today’s woodstoves and fireplace inserts produce about 70 percent less smoke than stoves built before 1992. Wood smoke contains a number of different pollutants, including fine particles, which can harm both your lungs and heart. Exposure to these fine particles has been linked to a variety of health problems - ranging from burning eyes and runny noses, to bronchitis and asthma attacks, to premature death in people with heart and lung disease. Older, inefficient woodstoves also lead to more creosote buildup in chimneys, which in turn, can cause fires. According to Ohio’s State Fire Marshal Office, there were more than 3,500 fires related to residential woodburning in Ohio from 2000-2005. These fires resulted in 140 injuries, 12 deaths, and \$ 33.6 million in property loss.

The program will run until August 31st. Coupons will be available through participating retailers on a first-come, first serve basis. To find out how to get your coupon, visit www.rapca.org or call RAPCA at 225-4435.

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