

# WOODSMOKE REDUCTION PILOT PROGRAM

A California Climate Investments Program

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Incentive Program for the Replacement of High-polluting, Uncertified Wood Heating Devices

## POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Project Year 4



Approved March 2026



North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District  
707 L Street, Eureka, California 95501  
(707) 443-3093  
[www.ncuaqmd.org](http://www.ncuaqmd.org)

## I. BACKGROUND

The Woodsmoke Reduction Pilot Program (Program) is a Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF) funded program designed to replace high-polluting, uncertified wood stoves, wood inserts, and fireplaces with cleaner burning, more efficient home heating devices. The Program will be administered by CARB and implemented by the North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District (District) in coordination with California Air Pollution Control Officer's Association. This Program will further the goals of Assembly Bill 32 (Nunez, Chapter 488, Statutes of 2006) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as provide important co-benefits in reducing black carbon emissions and improving air quality.

To be eligible for the Program, a homeowner or renter (for the purpose of this document referred to as Applicant) must currently use an uncertified wood stove, wood insert, or fireplace as a primary heat source. The incentive amount will depend on where the property is located and Applicant's household income, with some households qualifying for full replacement cost. Applicants residing in a census tract identified as a disadvantaged<sup>1</sup> or low-income<sup>2</sup> community can qualify for an enhanced incentive. The Program will maximize benefits to households in disadvantaged or low-income communities and low-income households and has as a goal to distribute 75 percent of total funding to these populations. Applicants residing outside of a census tract identified as a disadvantaged or low-income community who can demonstrate low-income eligibility based on household income can also qualify for enhanced incentives<sup>3</sup>. All other Applicants are eligible for a standard incentive.

## II. ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS AND APPLIANCE CRITERIA

Only individuals that are a homeowner or renter that reside within the District's jurisdiction, and are 18 years of age and older are eligible to receive an incentive under this program. Corporations, limited liability companies, and business entities are ineligible. Due to the potential for conflicts of interest, the following individuals (persons) are excluded from

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<sup>1</sup> Disadvantaged community census tracts are those identified by CalEPA using CalEnviroScreen 3.0. Maps of disadvantaged communities are available at <http://www.calepa.ca.gov/EnvJustice/GHGInvest/>

<sup>2</sup> For the purpose of this program, low-income communities are census tracts with a median household income at or below 80 percent of the statewide median household income or with a median household income at or below the threshold designated as low-income by Department of Housing and Community Development's State Income Limits adopted pursuant to the Health and Safety Code Section 50093. A final map of low-income communities is under development and is currently available at:

<https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/lowincomemapfull.htm>

<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this program, low-income households are those with household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median household income or with household incomes at or below the threshold designated as low-income by the Department of Housing and Community Development's list of state income limits adopted pursuant to Section 50093.

participating: District Governing Board Members, District Hearing Board Members, District employees, and the immediate family of Board Members and District employees. Spouses and dependents whom reside within the same residence as the Board Member or District employee are considered immediate family members.

The replacement project must include the following:

- installation at a physical location within the District boundaries
- be the primary residence of the homeowner or renter
- If the applicant is a renter, the homeowner must appear on the application as a co-applicant. Formal approval from the homeowner will be required
- Applicants must rely on an existing stove or insert that is uncertified, operational, and used as a primary source of heat in the residence

An uncertified stove or insert is one that does not comply with the performance and emission standards as defined in Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations, Part 60, Subpart AAA, February 28, 1988, or any subsequent revisions. The determination of eligibility and the extent of individual incentives shall be governed by the most current version of the "Woodsmoke Reduction Pilot Program Guidelines." Existing fireplaces may qualify for upgrade to a certified insert if sufficient documentation and evidence exists that the fireplace is the primary source of heat and the brickwork and/or chimney are structurally sound. If fireplace is replaced with a free-standing heating device, the fireplace must be made permanently inoperable.

Eligible devices for replacement include (existing devices):

- Wood stoves/inserts where the manufacturer and model are not listed on the U.S. EPA current<sup>4</sup> and historical<sup>5</sup> list of certified wood heaters.
- Wood stoves/inserts installed prior to 1988

To determine eligibility the applicant may do the following:

- Determine when the stove was installed. Stoves installed prior to 1988 do not comply with the particulate emission standards and therefore qualify for this Program.
- Check the stove model against the U.S. EPA list of current and historically certified wood stoves found on the List of EPA Certified Wood Stoves.
- Check the back of the stove for a certification label. Stoves which do not have any label describing particulate matter emission standards qualify for this Program. Wood stoves certified by the U.S. EPA to comply with the particulate emission standards are not eligible for this Program. These stoves will have a label permanently affixed to them stating that the stove is certified to comply with 1988, 1990, or 2015 standard.

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<sup>4</sup> Current list of U.S. EPA certified wood heaters: <https://www.epa.gov/compliance/list-epa-certified-wood-stoves>

<sup>5</sup> Historical list of U.S. EPA certified wood heaters: <https://www.epa.gov/compliance/historical-list-epa-certified-wood-heaters>

The Applicant will certify the eligibility of their current wood stove on the Voucher Application Form. The application will be reviewed by the District to determine if preliminary qualification requirements have been met. The existing stove's eligibility will be verified by the Installer and/or Vendor during an in-home estimate.

Eligible new devices within the Guidelines of the program include:

- U.S. EPA certified wood stove or wood insert with emission rates not to exceed 2.0 grams/hour that are certified to U.S. EPA "Step 2" NSPS
- Pellet home heating device;
- Electric home heating device or;
- Ductless mini-split heat pump

In a 2021 report, Assessment of U.S. EPA's Residential Certification Program Northeast States of Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM) revealed significant problems with the current wood stove certification program. As a result of significant flexibility in testing combined with limited oversight, many wood stoves certified by U.S. EPA as meeting the current New Source Performance Standard (NSPS) may have higher emissions than old uncertified stoves they are replacing. Most wood stoves on the market use either a secondary combustion system (non-catalytic stoves) or a catalytic combustor (catalytic stoves) to meet the U.S. EPA emission standards. Hybrid wood stoves combine a catalytic combustor with the secondary combustion system in one.

To ensure that the replacement devices reduce emissions as anticipated only certain wood stoves are eligible to receive incentives as part of this Program. Any pellet, catalytic or hybrid (catalytic/non-catalytic) wood stove meeting the current NSPS is an eligible replacement device. Catalytic and hybrid stoves demonstrated lower emissions when tested with the Integrated Duty Cycle (IDC) test method approved by the U.S. EPA as a broadly applicable Alternative Test Method (ATM). The IDC test assesses appliance performance under a range of operating and fueling conditions to better represent in-home use. Catalytic and hybrid wood stoves meeting current NSPS certification may be identified by performing an advanced search and selecting the appropriate subtype (catalytic stove or hybrid) from the U.S. EPA Certified Wood Stove Database. Non-catalytic stoves do not perform as well in IDC testing, but to provide households with some non-catalytic options, four stoves approved by the State of Alaska for installation in the Fairbanks PM2.5 Nonattainment Area, listed in Table 1, will be eligible for incentives. CARB will work with an independent contractor to test additional devices and update the list of eligible non-catalytic stoves on the Program website as appropriate. Additional devices may also be listed based on U.S. EPA retesting.

**Table 1. Non-Catalytic Wood Stoves Eligible for Incentives**

Manufacturer Name	Model Name	Annual Avg Emission Rate (grams/hr)
Energy Distribution	Invicta Group: Kazan, Kazan GA, Kiara, and Kiara GA	1.8
Energy Distribution	Gaya Ardoise, Itaya, Onyx, Gaya Feuille, Symphonia, Antaya, Theia, Akan	1.9
HHT/Hearth and Home Tech	21M-ACC-C, Discovery-1-C	1.7
Hearth and Home Technologies	Quadra Fire Expedition II and Vermont Castings Montpelier II	1.8

The replacement device must be installed by a professional, appropriately licensed Installer participating in this Program and purchased from a participating Vendor. The installation must adhere to all applicable local and State building codes. A list of participating Installers and Vendors will be established by the District. Self-installation of heating devices will not be allowed under this Program. Building permits or other required approvals shall be obtained per local or State ordinances and shall be the responsibility of the Installer or the Applicant. The Applicant will also agree to receive training on proper wood storage and wood burning practices (if applicable) and device operation and maintenance. The amount of incentive will be determined based on the cost of “basic models” of new heating devices will be eligible to receive funding. A “basic model” of heating device is considered to be a device that will adequately heat the square footage of the residence required and include no decorative upgrades. If a household selects a more elaborate model, they will be responsible for the price difference.

Installers and Vendors interested in participating in this program must agree to the terms and conditions of this Program by signing an agreement with the District. Only Installers and Vendors who have a signed agreement with the District will be eligible to participate in the Program. An active C-61 (D34 Prefabricated Equipment Contractor), or C-20, issued by the California Contractor’s State Licensing Board throughout the life of the contract and a minimum of three years of experience of installing home heating devices to manufacturer specifications is required to be considered. General Contractors possessing a Class B license may participate in the program as an Installer, as long as the contractor conforms to requirements set forth in the Business and Professions Code, Article 4, Classification 7057<sup>6</sup>. Installer and Vendor selection will be included on the Applicant Voucher. Use of an alternate Installer or Vendor will void the Applicant Voucher. If at the home estimate the Installer determines the project requirements

<sup>6</sup> [http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes\\_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=7057.&lawCode=BPC](http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=7057.&lawCode=BPC)

are outside the scope of work their licensing allows, the Voucher Recipient may select from another Installer from the list of Installers who have signed an agreement with the District.

### **III. PROJECT SELECTION**

The primary goal of the program is to obtain the largest possible air quality improvement benefit possible utilizing the limited program funding available. Applications for the current funding cycle will not be accepted prior to the first date of availability as determined annually. For each program cycle, the District may determine an implementation plan such that emission reductions will benefit a particular region or county for air quality purposes. The District may select areas for regional PM reductions or target an area, or city for PM reductions. Once the application period has ended, eligible and complete applications will be selected at random and placed on a list from which the Vouchers will be given. Voucher applications for Enhanced Incentives will be given priority during the selection. Based upon the order of this list, vouchers will be awarded until all the funds are exhausted. Those applications not initially selected for funding will be placed on an “eligible waiting list” and notified if funding becomes available.

The District reserves the right to alter the conditions of this program without notice and to administer these grant funds in the manner that provides the greatest benefit for District air quality improvement, as determined by the District.

### **IV. APPLICATION PROCESS & DISTRICT WORKFLOW**

Prior to each cycle, District Staff prepares a program implementation memo and submits it to the APCO for approval. The memo identifies key milestones and details for the program including but not limited to: vendor and installer participation and current approved listing, outreach events, application period, target funding areas, and voucher expiration dates for the current cycle.

Applications for Vouchers will be available at the District Office for a period of 30 days on the District Website at [www.ncuaqmd.org](http://www.ncuaqmd.org) or by contacting the Woodsmoke Reduction Program Coordinator at (707) 443-3093. Applications will be accepted for a period of 30 days.

The procedures for application submittal and voucher processing are listed below:

1. Each Applicant must submit a complete Voucher Application Form to the District and meet the general program criteria as applicable. Incomplete or illegible responses will result in application rejection. Once submitted to the District, all application materials

become the property of the District, will not be returned, and are subject to Public Records Requests. Applications may be submitted by mail, online or hand delivery. Faxes will not be accepted. No application will be accepted prior to the opening of the application period.

**Online application submittal is available on District website:**

<https://www.ncuaqmd.org/woodsmoke-reduction-pilot-program>

**Paper application forms should be mailed or delivered to:**

North Coast Unified AQMD  
Attn: Woodsmoke Reduction Pilot Program  
707 L Street  
Eureka, CA 95501

2. District staff reviews the applications for content and to verify eligibility of proposed heating device. If the applicants request an Enhanced Voucher, staff will confirm income eligibility and/or Low-Income Community or Disadvantaged Community designation of residence.
3. Voucher applications will be selected at random and placed on a list from which the Vouchers will be given. Voucher applications for Enhanced Incentives will be given priority during the selection.
4. Applicants will be notified of approval to participate in the program and will be required to schedule an in-home estimate with a participating Installer and or Vendor (if providing installation). The Installer will verify the existing stove's eligibility and present an estimate for installation to the Applicant.
5. Applicant will submit estimate and proof of device eligibility to the District. Applicants will have 30 days to complete the in-home estimate and device eligibility process.
6. Vouchers will be issued after District approval. Project must be completed before the expiration date listed on the Voucher.
7. Vouchers will be accepted by participating retailers at the time of sale and applied as a discount. Retailers will notify the District of a sale once the customer has signed a contract or entered into a binding purchase agreement.
8. Installation must be completed by a licensed contractor with a valid building permit within 90 days of Voucher being issued.
9. Supporting documentation for complete installation and existing device scrapping must be received by the District within 10 days of project completion.
10. Retailers and/or Installers will provide training to the applicant to ensure the new device is properly operated and maintained to maximize energy efficiency and achieve the lowest possible emission rates. The Acknowledgement of Training Form will be used to document the training requirement.

11. Retailers and Installers will be reimbursed by the District once the installation is complete, the replaced device is properly dismantled and recycled, and required documents are submitted to the District.
12. The District will submit the required documentation and reports to CAPCOA and retain all necessary Program information.

## V. PROJECT SOLICITATION

The District is comprised of three (3) counties: Humboldt, Del Norte and Trinity. Except for non-attainment of the California 24-hr standard for PM<sub>10</sub> in Humboldt County, the air in Humboldt, Del Norte and Trinity Counties is considered to be either unclassified or in attainment for state and federal ambient air quality standards.

In order to reach all sectors of the community, the District utilizes its website, newspapers, public service announcements, and industry contacts. The District also maintains a mailing list of interested parties who receive a copy of the program announcement. Additional copies of the annual announcement may be posted at local government department offices in all three counties.

The District reserves the right to alter the conditions of this program without notice. The District reserves the right to administer these grant funds in the manner in which it believes to best benefit the air quality of the three-county air district and selected areas targeted for PM reduction benefits.

## VI. VOUCHER AMOUNTS

### Enhanced Incentive

Applicants that are eligible for the Enhanced Incentive will receive a voucher that will cover all eligible project costs up to **\$12,000** for heat pump, or **\$7,000** for all other eligible devices. Eligible project costs include the cost of the new device, including sales tax; installation, including any parts or materials; and permits. All eligible costs must be supported by appropriate documentation. The Installer and or Retailer will be required to provide a base estimate for the installation of a basic model that will be safe, clean-burning, and efficient. Upgrades above the base estimate will be paid by the Applicant. The District will pay the Installer and/or Vendor the approved incentive amount. Any additional balance due will be paid by the Applicant.

Applicants are eligible for the Enhanced Voucher if the wood-burning device is in a census tract designated as a Low-Income Community or Disadvantaged Community. Low income communities are identified on the following map:

[https://gis.carb.arb.ca.gov/portal/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=5dc1218631fa46bc8d340b8e82548a6a&page=Priority-Populations-4\\_0](https://gis.carb.arb.ca.gov/portal/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=5dc1218631fa46bc8d340b8e82548a6a&page=Priority-Populations-4_0)

Applicants residing outside of a Low-Income Community or Disadvantaged Communities may qualify for an Enhanced Incentive by submitting proof of participation in one of the following low-income assistance programs:

- U.S. Department of Agriculture Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program;
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP);
- California Alternate Rates for Energy (CARE) Program with any utility company;

Applicants with household incomes between 60 and 80 percent of MHI do not typically qualify for the programs listed above. Therefore, to qualify for the Low Income Qualified Voucher, the Applicant will have to demonstrate their income eligibility directly to the District. This could be accomplished by presenting pay stubs, tax returns, or income statements for each person living in the residence and, if qualifying using the HCD low-income limits, reporting the number of people in the household. Currently under MHI, any household with income not exceeding \$77,067.20 is considered low-income. The HCD low-income limits vary depending on the county and household size.<sup>7</sup>

### **Standard Incentive**

All other applicants not eligible for the Enhanced Voucher will be eligible for a voucher amount of **\$7,500** for a heat pump, or **\$5,000** for all other eligible devices. The voucher may be used towards eligible project costs as described above.

## **VII. REPORTING**

CAPCOA and the Districts will be responsible for reporting and recordkeeping. All reports must be consistent with the quantification methodologies<sup>8</sup> and reporting guidance<sup>9</sup> developed by CARB and the requirements established in these Program Guidelines. Some reported project information will be publicly available on the CARB website, including the amount of funding that

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<sup>7</sup> Available at [www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/income-limits/state-and-federal-income-limits/docs/inc2k18.pdf](http://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/income-limits/state-and-federal-income-limits/docs/inc2k18.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> Available at [www.arb.ca.gov/cci-quantification](http://www.arb.ca.gov/cci-quantification)

<sup>9</sup> Available at [www.arb.ca.gov/cci-fundingguidelines](http://www.arb.ca.gov/cci-fundingguidelines)

is being spent on projects that benefit disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and low-income households.

In order to document and calculate reductions in GHG, black carbon, and criteria pollutants emissions, and document other co-benefits and benefits to disadvantaged communities, low-income communities, and low-income households, Districts will be responsible for collecting, maintaining, and reporting to CAPCOA the following information for each change-out:

- Tracking number for each device;
- Location of change-out;
- Incentive amount and, if applicable, verification that Applicant qualifies for an Enhanced Incentive based on the location of the property in a disadvantaged or low-income census tract or Applicant's household income;
- Criteria the project meets for benefiting a disadvantaged community, low-income community, or low-income household and description of how the project meets a community need;
- Type of wood stove being replaced;
- Replacement device type and model;
- Quantity of wood burned annually before replacement;
- Replacement device emission rates and efficiency (if available);
- Installation date;
- Verification of destruction of uncertified stove (including recycling if available locally) or, where applicable, verification of rendering fireplace and chimney permanently inoperable;
- Verification that the resident was trained on following best practices in wood storage, wood burning for residential space heating, and device maintenance requirements of a new device;
- GGRF dollars spent
- Information on jobs and training opportunities created and whether employees are residents of disadvantaged or low-income communities or low-income households.

Each wood stove replacement must include all of the parameters necessary for quantifying the reductions. Record keeping and tracking will be retained by the District for three years after the "Project Closeout" report is submitted by CAPCOA. In order to have sufficient time to process final payments and to close out the grant agreement, the District must submit all deliverables and payment requests within 45 days after the project performance period.

The District will provide quarterly progress reports detailing project information and payments in a format approved and provided by CAPCOA, which at a minimum shall include the information necessary to satisfy the reporting and recordkeeping provisions of sections 8 and 10 of the state Program Guidelines. The District agrees to advise CAPCOA if its program is underperforming, and to undergo efforts to improve the performance of the program in order to expend the funding in

a timely manner or return to CAPCOA unused funds. The District will return the funds within 45 days of a request from CAPCOA.

The following reporting milestones apply:

Task	Milestone Description	Timeline
1	Execute Grant Agreement	No later than April 1, 2020
2	Transfer funds to Grantee	No later than June 30, 2020
3	Submit "Awarded" Reports to CARB	June 1, 2020 or December 1, 2020
4	Begin project installations	Upon receiving funds
5	Submit "Implemented" Reports	Each reporting cycle
6	Submit "Project Outcome" Reports for subset of projects, as requested by CARB Liaison	Each reporting cycle
7	Submit quarterly fiscal accounting reports	Each calendar quarter
8	Complete project installations	No later than June 1, 2027
9	Submit "Closeout" report upon completion of the project at the next reporting cycle	No later than June 30, 2027
11	Submit final "Project Outcome" Reports for subset of projects, as requested by CARB Liaison	Up to 18 months after installations are complete

The Executive Officer of the District hereby approves the "Woodsmoke Reduction Program Policies and Procedures" manual for the administration of the Woodsmoke Reduction Program in the District.



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Brian Wilson, APCO

3/11/2026

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Date