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Consultation on Solid Fuel Burning

Taking action to reduce fine particulate matter and
smoke emissions

January 2026

We are the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We are responsible for improving and protecting the environment, growing the green economy, sustaining thriving rural communities and supporting our world-class food, farming and fishing industries.

We work closely with our 33 agencies and arm's length bodies on our ambition to make our air purer, our water cleaner, our land greener and our food more sustainable. Our mission is to restore and enhance the environment for the next generation, and to leave the environment in a better state than we found it.



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www.gov.uk/defra

Contents

Consultation on Solid Fuel Burning	1
Taking action to reduce PM _{2.5} and smoke emissions	1
About this consultation	4
How to respond	5
Questions about you	6
Foreword	8
Context	9
Overview of solid fuel burning policy proposals	11
Part 1 – Policies and Consultation Questions on new emission limits	11
Questions on proposed new stove emission limits	13
Part 2 – Policies and Consultation Questions on mandatory labelling proposals	14
Questions on proposed new mandatory labelling scheme for solid fuel appliances	17
Questions on proposed mandatory health labelling for fuels	20
Part 3 – Policies and consultation questions on increasing enforcement penalties	20
Questions on proposed domestic Solid Fuels Regulations Enforcement	22
Additional evidence	23
Glossary	24

About this consultation

This public consultation is for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Please note that we (the UK government and devolved governments) are looking to take forward some of the policy options in this document on a UK-wide basis. However, we expect that some proposals may apply in England only and not throughout the whole of the UK. In some cases, the territorial application will be determined at a later stage in keeping with devolved legislation. More detail is provided in the “territorial application” section for each policy option.

This consultation provides an opportunity for stakeholders to influence policies intended to reduce fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) emissions from domestic solid fuel burning (including wood and manufactured solid fuels). We will use the responses to this consultation to finalise the proposed package of measures aimed at reducing emissions from this source.

The introduction to this document outlines the consultation process and asks demographic questions (Questions 1 - 8). Following this, background information is provided in the Foreword and Context sections. The next section sets out the proposed policies and presents consultation questions (Questions 9 – 34). It is divided into three parts with 2 – 3 thematic sections in each part.

Part 1 outlines proposed new emission limits for solid fuel appliances. Part 2 provides details of proposed new mandatory labelling schemes for stoves and for manufactured solid fuels (MSFs). Part 3 sets out the current regulatory landscape applying to the supply of solid fuels used for domestic burning. It then discusses introducing an increased fixed penalty notice.

Consultation Process

Audience and application

This consultation is open to the public. It is important for us to hear from those who will be directly impacted by the proposals.

This includes, but is not limited to, members of the public, relevant industry representatives and trade associations who will be affected by the proposals, environmental and health groups.

Purpose of the consultation

We want to obtain views from stakeholders and members of the public on a package of policies intended to reduce PM_{2.5} emissions from domestic solid fuel burning (including wood and manufactured solid fuels). As well as the policy proposals, we want to receive opinions and suggestions on the suggested example labels and health statements, and on the proposed timescales for implementing these policies.

We request responses to the questions below in order to obtain these views and opinions.

Consultation timelines

The consultation will run from 22 January to 19 March. At the end of the consultation period, we will publish a summary of responses and an outline of next steps on gov.uk.

How to respond

We encourage responses via an online survey on **Citizen Space**, an online consultation tool at <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/domestic-burning/consultation-on-solid-fuel-burning/>. Consultations receive a high level of interest across many sectors and using the online tool assists our analysis of responses, enabling more efficient and effective consideration of issues. However, responses can be sent by email or post. In your response please state:

- your name
- your email address
- your organisation (if applicable)
- whether you would like your response to be confidential (if yes, please state your reasons)

Enquiries and responses may also be directed:

- By email to [Burning_Consultation@defra.gov.uk](mailto: Burning_Consultation@defra.gov.uk) including whether you need a hard copy of the consultation
- In writing to the Consultation Coordinator, Defra, 2nd Floor, Foss House, Kings Pool, 1-2 Peasholme Green, York, YO1 7PX

Where you are asked to provide an explanation of your answer, please provide as much detail as you can, so that we can understand any comments or concerns. When considering responses to this consultation, the government will give greater weight to responses that are based on argument and evidence, rather than simple expressions of support or opposition.

Use of data

Information and comments submitted through the consultation will be used to inform and further develop the proposed package of measures to ensure its feasibility for delivery and that it takes into account stakeholders' views.

Your personal data will be anonymised as part of the analysis process. Once your personal data has been anonymised, it can no longer be associated with you and is no longer personal data. The anonymised data may be used within an AI system to support the analysis.

Complaints procedure

All complaints about the consultation process should be submitted to the Consultation Coordinator via email: consultation.coordinator@defra.gov.uk. To meet with Defra's service standard, all complaints will be responded to within 15 days of receipt.

Using and sharing your information

How we use your personal data is set out in the consultation and call for evidence exercise privacy notice which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defras-consultations-and-call-for-evidence-exercises-privacy-notice>.

Other information

This consultation is being conducted in line with the Cabinet Office “Consultation Principles” which can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/consultation-principles-guidance>.

Questions about you

1. Would you like your response to be confidential?

[Yes/No]

2. If you answered yes to this question, please give your reason(s).

[Open text box]

3: What is your name?

[Open text box]

4: What is your email address?

[Open text box]

5: In which part of the United Kingdom are you based?

- England
- Wales
- Scotland
- Northern Ireland

6: Which part of the UK are you primarily interested in?

- England (excluding London)
- London
- Wales
- Scotland
- Northern Ireland
- All of the UK

7: Who are you responding as (select one option only)?

- industry

- member of the public
- public body or local authority
- trade body
- academic body
- non-governmental organisation
- other (please state)

8: If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, what is its name?

[Open text box]

Foreword

We all deserve to live in an environment where our everyday lives are not negatively affected by the quality of the air that we breathe. The burning of solid fuels, including the use of woodburning stoves in domestic settings, is growing in popularity¹ and leading to more harmful emissions entering our air.

Fine particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) are particles of 2.5 micrometres or less that the World Health Organisation considers the most harmful pollutant to human health.^{2;3} These particles can enter the bloodstream and internal organs, and there is a growing body of evidence linking exposure with a range of debilitating health conditions including cardiovascular disease and asthma. In 2019, the estimated mortality burden of long-term exposure to air pollution in the UK was equivalent to 29,000 to 43,000 deaths for adults aged 30 and over.⁴ Similarly, the World Health Organisation has set global air quality guidelines for sulphur dioxide, which is also known to exacerbate asthma and is associated with respiratory mortality⁵⁶.

While air pollution harms everyone, there is strong evidence that the health impacts of air pollution are not felt equally across society. The impacts of poor air quality are disproportionately felt by children, those who are pregnant, those with existing health conditions, older people, and by low-income communities, exacerbating health and social inequalities.

Air quality in the UK has improved in recent years, but we know there is more to do. The estimated cost of health problems resulting from exposure to air pollution is more than £20

¹ [Evaluation of the Air Quality \(Domestic Solid Fuels Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2020 and Monitoring of domestic burning practices in the UK - AQ1043](#)

² [Health risks](#) (Air Pollution section), World Health Organization website

³ [Health consequences of air pollution](#), World Health Organization website

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62ab19c4e90e07038e6df074/CHaPR_AQ_Special_Edition_2206116.pdf

⁵ WHO Global air quality guidelines: [WHO global air quality guidelines: particulate matter \(PM_{2.5} and PM10\), ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide and carbon monoxide](#)

⁶ Short-term exposure to sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and all-cause and respiratory mortality <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160412021000593>

billion annually for the UK.⁷ These are the costs to individuals and society (including to the NHS and for social care).

Air quality is a devolved responsibility, and all the devolved governments are progressing plans to drive down emissions:

- A revised Environmental Improvement Plan for England was published in December 2025
- The Welsh Government published its Clean Air Plan for Wales: Healthy Air, Healthy Wales in August 2020⁸.
- The Scottish Government published its Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 Strategy in July 2021⁹.
- In September 2024 the Northern Ireland Executive published their own Environmental Improvement Plan¹⁰.

Emissions from domestic burning continue to be a significant source of PM_{2.5} emitted in the UK. This is why the UK Government, together with the devolved governments, is launching this public consultation on further actions we can take to bring down the levels of emissions from solid fuel burning.

This Government is considering further measures in this space to further reduce these harmful emissions, particularly in the most densely populated places or where there is evidence of the most significant harms.

Context

‘Domestic burning’ refers to households burning a variety of solid fuels, including wood, coal and manufactured solid fuels, for purposes such as home-heating. Domestic burning was a major source of the UK’s PM_{2.5} emissions in 2023, contributing 20.1% of total PM_{2.5} emissions, similar to emissions of PM_{2.5} from road transport (20.5%).¹¹ Emissions of PM_{2.5} from domestic burning rose 36% from 2009 - 2020, largely due to a rise in emissions from

⁷ <https://rcp.ac.uk/media/izul5ign/every-breath-we-take-the-lifelong-impact-of-air-pollution-full-report.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.gov.wales/clean-air-plan-wales-healthy-air-healthy-wales>

⁹ [Cleaner Air for Scotland 2 - Towards a Better Place for Everyone - gov.scot](https://www.gov.scot/cleaner-air-scotland-2-towards-better-place-everyone/)

¹⁰ Environmental Improvement Plan for Northern Ireland: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/Environmental%20Improvement%20Plan%20for%20Northern%20Ireland.PDF>

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/emissions-of-air-pollutants/emissions-of-air-pollutants-in-the-uk-particulate-matter-pm10-and-pm25>

the burning of wood. Policies introduced since then have helped reduce emissions from this source but there is further to go.

Research¹² conducted by Defra over 2022-23 found that approximately 23% of households in the UK engaged in domestic burning. This includes 8% who burned indoors only, 11% who burned outdoors only, and 4% who did both. This is an increase from 2018-19, when 19% of households reported burning. This increase is largely driven by a rise in indoor burning, from 8% in 2018-19 to 12% in 2022-23 (combining those burning indoors only and those who did both). Although only approximately 1% of UK households use solid fuel as their primary source of heating, the government accepts that requiring these households to switch to another source of heating may be disproportionately expensive and disruptive.

Most indoor burning is accounted for by the use of either burners, stoves or enclosed fireplaces (65%) or open fireplaces (32%). Our research also suggests that solid fuel appliance use is relatively evenly spread across regions, apart from London where use is less common. Whilst prevalence of indoor burning tends to be higher in rural areas (23%), compared to urban areas (9%), overall, more burning occurs in urban areas due to higher population and housing density. Outdoor burning also contributes to poor air quality. However, we consider it disproportionate to introduce new restrictions on people's enjoyment of barbeques or outdoor events such as bonfire or firework nights.

The PM_{2.5} targets under the Environment Act 2021¹³ require PM_{2.5} concentrations in England to be reduced to no more than 10 micrograms per metre cubed ($\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) by 2040, and to reduce public exposure to PM_{2.5} by 35% by 2040, compared to a 2018 baseline. A new PM_{2.5} target in Wales is due to be set under the Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Act 2024 by February 2027. Scotland has adopted an annual objective for PM_{2.5} of 10 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ which was achieved in 2020. Northern Ireland is considering implementing a new annual limit for PM_{2.5} in light of the recent World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines, subject to public consultation and Ministerial approval.

A number of measures have been implemented to reduce emissions from domestic burning. Under the Clean Air Act 1993, and Clean Air (Northern Ireland) Order 1981, local authorities in England, Wales and Scotland, and district councils in Northern Ireland, can declare Smoke Control Areas (SCAs) covering some or all of their area, where it is an offence to emit smoke from a chimney of a building. If solid fuels are burnt within SCAs, they must either be used in an approved appliance or be an approved fuel which can be used in non-authorised appliances (e.g. open fires).

Following feedback from local authorities, the Environment Act 2021 made changes to the SCA framework in England to streamline enforcement, including allowing councils to issue

¹² [Domestic Burning Practices in the UK](#)

¹³ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukssi/2023/96/contents/made>

fixed penalty notices (FPNs) to those contravening the rules, and granting local authorities the power to broaden the scope of their SCAs to include moored vessels, including inland waterway vessels such as canal boats. The Welsh Government made similar changes under the Environment (Air Quality and Soundscapes) (Wales) Act 2024. The Scottish Government has reviewed the Clean Air Act 1993 and identified four priority areas for domestic burning, which will be considered further as part of the development work for the next air quality framework for Scotland.

In addition, through the Air Quality (Domestic Solid Fuels Standards) (England) Regulations 2020 (“Domestic Solid Fuels Regulations”), fuel standards in England were improved. The Domestic Solid Fuels Regulations introduced restrictions on the sale of wet wood, limits on sulphur content and smoke emissions from MSFs, and phased out the sale of bituminous coal (traditional house coal) for burning in domestic premises in England. In Northern Ireland there is a commitment under the Energy Strategy – Path to Net Zero Energy¹⁴ to phase out coal and certain solid fuels for home heating.

Whilst these measures have helped reduce emissions and make progress towards meeting England and Wales’ PM_{2.5} targets, further action will need to be taken to be confident of meeting our long-term statutory targets and achieve public health benefits.

Overview of solid fuel burning policy proposals

This section seeks views on a package of policies to further reduce PM_{2.5} emissions from domestic solid fuel burning (including wood and MSFs).

On solid fuel appliances, including woodburning stoves, we are seeking views on a new stove emission limit and the introduction of a mandatory labelling scheme. On fuels, we are seeking views on mandatory health labelling.

Air quality is a policy area where responsibility is devolved and as such this is a joint consultation on behalf of the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and the Department for the Economy and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs in Northern Ireland. Further detail on the territorial application of each policy proposal has been provided.

¹⁴ Energy Strategy - Path to Net Zero Energy: [https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/Energy-Strategy-for-Northern-Ireland-path-to-netzero.pdf](https://www.economy-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/economy/Energy-Strategy-for-Northern-Ireland-path-to-net-zero.pdf)

Part 1 – Policies and Consultation Questions on new emission limits

New solid fuel appliance emission limits

There are currently a range of regulations solid fuel appliances must adhere to in order to be placed on the market in the UK such as the Ecodesign Regulations¹⁵¹⁶. Additionally, the Clean Air Act 1993 and Clean Air (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 set certain standards for solid fuel appliances if they are to be used with unauthorised fuels, such as wood, in Smoke Control Areas (SCAs) declared by local authorities/district councils (from this point known as 'local authorities') in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Current stove standards permit a smoke emissions rate of no more than 5 grams per hour (plus 0.1g per 0.3 kW of output) of operation. Testing shows that the vast majority of new solid fuel appliances significantly outperform a standard of 3 grams of smoke (plus 0.1g per 0.3kW of output) per hour of operation. Therefore, we are consulting on a new smoke emission limit of 1 gram of smoke (plus 0.1g per 0.3 kW of output) per hour of operation for new solid fuel appliances. The proposed new smoke emission limit would apply to closed fronted solid fuel local space heaters and open fronted solid fuel local space heaters. Industry testing data suggests that 70% of stoves tested since 2018 would meet this new standard. To maximise the impact of this policy, we will look to improve the testing methodology by establishing one testing regime to meet a range of air quality needs including the new stringent emission limit. This proposed new standard would apply to placement on the market of new solid fuel appliances only. Solid fuel appliances which are already installed or placed into the market before any new legislation comes into force would not be affected.

To ensure an appropriate time period is allowed for industry to adapt to the new limits, we propose deferring the new standard coming into force for 3-5 years from the date new legislation is made.

In addition to reducing the emissions limits for solid fuel appliances, we plan to introduce regular retesting of solid fuel appliances after they have entered the market. Currently appliances are only tested when first entering the market. This is insufficient as changes in the manufacturing process could have an impact on emissions. Regular retesting of appliances on the market would provide assurance that appliances are still being produced to meet the specified requirements. There would be no requirement to retest appliances already installed.

¹⁵ 'The Ecodesign Regulations' cover both the Ecodesign for Energy-related Products Regulations 2010 (SI 2010/2617) and Commission Regulation (EU) 2015/1185 on ecodesign requirements for solid fuel local space heaters (EUR 2015/1185)

¹⁶ Ecodesign of energy-consuming products - <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/placing-energy-related-products-on-the-uk-market>

This measure is expected to achieve an average annual abatement of 1.08 kilotonnes of PM_{2.5} over the 10-year period 2027-2036 (equivalent to a reduction of 1.9% of total UK PM_{2.5} emissions in 2023).

Territorial application

As Ecodesign rules applies differently in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, we propose to apply this new emission limit across Great Britain only. In Northern Ireland, the new limits would apply in Smoke Control Areas, as declared by district councils in Northern Ireland.

Questions on proposed new stove emission limits

9. Do you feel the proposed new emissions limit of 1g per hour (plus 0.1g per 0.3 kW of output) for stoves is appropriate?

[Yes/No/don't know]

If no, please explain what you feel the emissions limit should be and why [Open text box]

10. Do you have any comments on the impact (positive or negative) resulting from the proposed new standard? This could be in terms of air quality, human health, the economy or the stove industry, for example.

[Open text box]

11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that a 3 – 5 year timescale for the new limits coming into force following new legislation is appropriate?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; Don't know]

If you disagree, please explain why and give your views on an alternative timeframe [open text box]

12. Do you have a view on which standard or regime could be used for a single testing regime for appliance emissions? [open text]

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree that solid fuel appliances should be subject to periodic retesting after being on the market, to ensure continued compliance with air quality and efficiency standards?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; don't know]

[If strongly agree/agree]

How often do you think retesting should be carried out?

- Every 2 years

- Every 3 – 4 years
- Every 5 – 6 years
- Every 7 years or more
- Don't know

Part 2 – Policies and Consultation Questions on mandatory labelling proposals

New mandatory labelling scheme for solid fuel appliances

Solid fuel appliances (e.g. woodburning stoves) currently require an energy efficiency label, showing efficiency of heat output compared to the energy value of fuel added. This label contains no information about air pollutant emissions. There are however a number of voluntary industry led schemes which provide emissions information.

To provide customers with the information they need to make informed choices, including information about the health impacts of domestic burning, and to drive further innovation in the stove industry, we propose introducing a mandatory stove labelling scheme for new solid fuel appliances. The new label would be displayed alongside the existing energy efficiency label and include a rating scale feature reflecting the measured emissions of the product and the fuels for which its use has been tested.

The label would provide clear, standardised, and consistent information, available immediately at the purchase point, allowing consumers to compare models and make an informed decision on the cleanest product to buy. Appliances already on the market, as well as in people's homes, would not be affected by the new labelling. However, any appliance placed on the market after the date labelling became mandatory would need to comply. Appliances already in shops would be excluded from the new provisions. Many appliances are only tested with one type of fuel (usually wood) but are sold as "multi-fuel stoves", with accessories provided for burning other fuels. A clear label with the permitted fuel(s) listed on it would limit this practice and support cleaner burning.

We are consulting on a draft emissions label design. The key features of the draft label are:

- A-C rating scale – this is similar to the energy efficiency A-G scale, but used to indicate how polluting the appliance is
- Pictograms/text which depict the fuels the stove has been tested with and are permitted to be used
- Clear statement about the health impacts of domestic burning

Ecolabels could encourage greener choices as consumers may pay small price premiums for eco-labelled products. There is evidence¹⁷ that traffic light colour schemes (such as those used in the examples below) are effective at communicating environmental impact to consumers. There is, however, some evidence¹⁸ of a ‘green halo effect’ through which eco-labels enhance the perception of a product beyond what the eco-label describes (e.g. a carbon label could improve how people think about a product’s safety). It may be beneficial for the introduction of these new labels to be accompanied by further education or communication campaigns to enhance the impact of the ecolabels. While evidence is limited, we understand that generally businesses show positive attitudes towards ecolabels and are willing to adopt them.¹⁹

Tackling air quality is a key element of the Government’s mission to improve the nation’s health. We understand that people who burn at home can engage with messaging about the health impacts of domestic burning on themselves and their families. We are therefore proposing that the label should also contain a clear statement highlighting the impact burning solid fuels has on the health of individuals and their families.

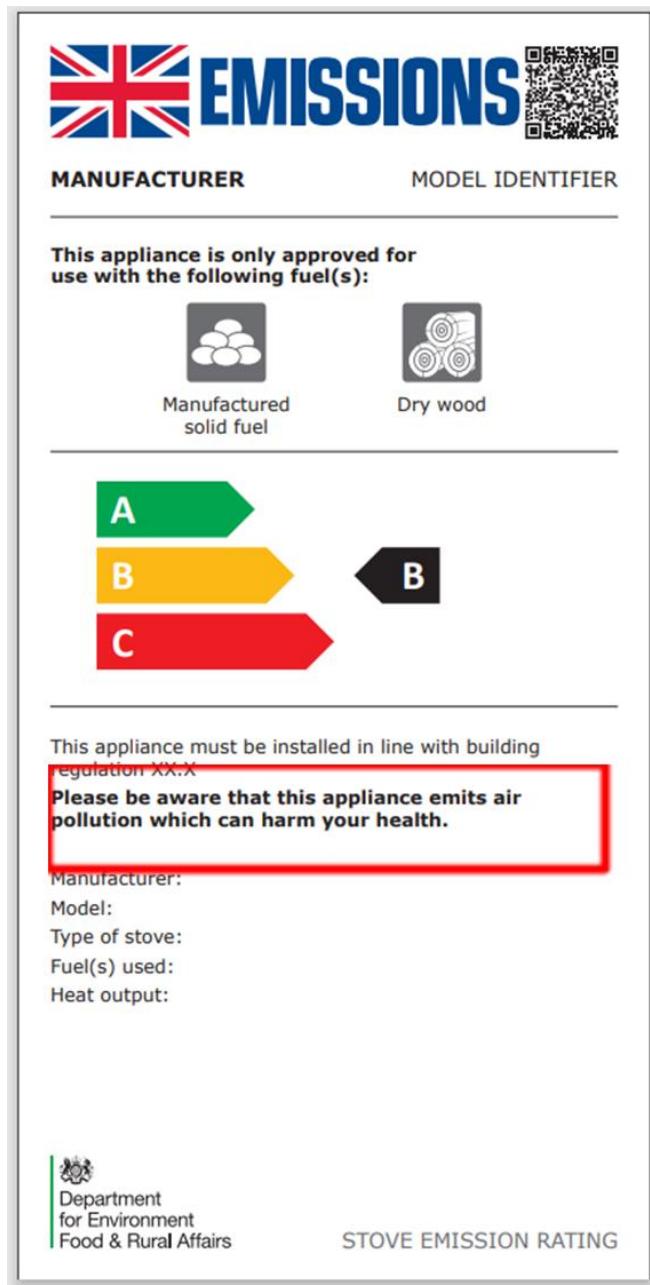
This part of the label may look like the health statement in bold in the example provided below (or a variation of this): *‘Please be aware that this appliance emits air pollution into and around your home which can harm your health’*.

This option would require new legislation. The new labelling would be in addition to, not a replacement for, current labelling. If these proposals were taken forward, we would engage with industry to determine the final content and design of the label. The lead in time would need to be decided in consultation with industry as we are aware that packaging is ordered sometimes years in advance.

¹⁷ [The role of ecolabels in the path to net zero](#)

¹⁸ [The role of ecolabels in the path to net zero](#)

¹⁹ [The role of ecolabels in the path to net zero](#)



It is proposed that the enforcement body for the new labelling requirements would be Trading Standards of the relevant local authority in Great Britain. In Northern Ireland this measure would be voluntary only.

To ensure that penalties for non-compliance are proportionate to the size of the business, we propose introducing a range of penalties between £300-£2000. We are also considering introducing an increased penalty for repeat offenders to deter ongoing non-compliance. The proposed new regulations would also provide Enforcement Officers the powers to enter a premises at a reasonable time, inspect goods and require persons to provide information. Where enforcement action is required the enforcement authority would also be allowed to charge persons their costs incurred in performing their functions.

Territorial application

For emissions labelling, Schedule 6 of the Environment Act 2021 allows the UK Government to establish labelling schemes. The proposed labelling scheme would be implemented in Great Britain only under this Schedule with the agreement of the Scottish Government and the Welsh Government. Under the Windsor Framework, Northern Ireland is precluded from making this measure obligatory for stoves placed on the market, and therefore persons placing stoves on the market would not be subject to the aforementioned penalties. However, suppliers and sellers will still be able to apply emissions labelling to products on a voluntary basis.

Health labelling would likely require new legislation in order to apply across the UK with agreement from the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and the responsible Department in Northern Ireland.

Questions on proposed new mandatory labelling scheme for solid fuel appliances

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the introduction of a mandatory labelling scheme for solid fuel appliances?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; don't know]

Please provide further detail to support your response. [Open text box]

15. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the example label above effectively communicates information about the air pollution emissions of a solid fuel appliance?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; don't know]

Please provide further detail to support your response. [Open text box]

16. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the example label effectively informs consumers about the fuels permitted for use in a given solid fuel appliance?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; don't know]

Please provide further detail to support your response. [Open text box]

17. To what extent do you agree or disagree that health labelling should be mandatory on solid fuel appliances?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; don't know].

Please provide any evidence you have to support your response. [Open text box]

18. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the example label above effectively conveys that there are health impacts of using solid fuels appliances to consumers? [Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; don't know]

Please provide further detail to support your response. [Open text box]

19. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the health statement "Please be aware that this appliance emits air pollution which can harm your health" is appropriate?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; don't know].

If you disagree, please suggest an alternative health statement [Open text box]

20. Are there any additional elements or considerations which you think should be included in the labelling specification or design?

[Yes; no; don't know]. [If yes] What considerations you think should be included in the labelling specification or design [open text box]

21. Do you agree or disagree that Trading Standards should be the enforcing body for the proposed labelling requirements?

Agree, Disagree, Don't know

If disagree, please provide further detail to support your response. [Open text box]

22. To what extent do you agree or disagree that a range of penalties between £300-£2000 should be used for breaches of the proposed new labelling requirements?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; don't know].

If you disagree, please provide alternative options [open text box]

23. To what extent do you agree or disagree that an increased penalty within the proposed range of £300-£2000 for repeat offenders should be introduced to deter continued non-compliance?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; Don't know].

Please provide further detail to support your response. [Open text box]

24. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the enforcing body should be able to enter a premises at a reasonable time, inspect goods and require persons to provide information?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; Don't know].

Please provide further detail to support your response. [Open text box]

25. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the enforcement authority should be allowed to charge persons the costs incurred in performing their functions?
[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; Don't know].
Please provide further detail to support your response. [Open text box]

Mandatory health labelling for fuels

As set out earlier in this document, we are proposing mandatory health impact labelling on new appliances. We consider that it would be consistent to also add health impact labelling to fuel packaging. Tackling air quality is a key element of the government's mission to improve the nation's health. We understand that burners can engage with messaging related to the health impacts of domestic burning on themselves and their families. As domestic burners purchase fuels relatively frequently, labelling on these products could have more impact as it will provide a regular reminder that burning these fuels have a negative effect on the health of their family and their neighbours.

Below are some examples of label designs for illustrative purposes only:



Example A



Example B

The lead in time would need to be decided in consultation with industry as we are aware that packaging is ordered sometimes years in advance. If these proposals were taken forward, we would engage with industry and eNGOs to determine the final content and design of the label.

Territorial application

This option would likely require new legislation in order to apply across the UK with agreement from the Scottish Government, the Welsh Government and the responsible Department in Northern Ireland.

Questions on proposed mandatory health labelling for fuels

26. To what extent do you agree or disagree that health labelling should be mandatory on solid fuel packaging?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; don't know].

Please provide any evidence you have to support your response. [Open text box]

27. Are there any additional elements or considerations which you think should be included in the labelling specification or design?

[Yes; no; don't know]

[If yes] Please provide details of the other elements or considerations you think should be included in the labelling specification or design [Open text box]

28. Which of the following health statements do you prefer, and why?

- Option A: This product causes negative health impacts
- Option B: This product causes negative health impacts to you and your family
- Option C: Burning solid fuels to heat your home can lead to debilitating health conditions, including cardiovascular disease and asthma, which can result in premature death

[Option A; Option B; Option C.]

29. Please give a reason for your choice [free text]

30. If you would prefer an alternative health statement, please provide this and give your reasoning

[Open text box]

Part 3 – Policies and consultation questions on increasing enforcement penalties

At present, the sale and supply of coal, wood and manufactured solid fuels is regulated in England by the Air Quality (Domestic Solid Fuels) (England) Regulations 2020.

There are currently no corresponding restrictions in Scotland or Wales or Northern Ireland outside declared Smoke Control Areas.

The Domestic Solid Fuels Standards introduced restrictions on the sale of certain fuels for use in domestic dwellings. In May 2021, the legislation introduced restrictions on wood sold in volumes less than 2m³ in England requiring it to have a moisture content of 20% or less. There is also a restriction on supplying wood above 2m³ without a notice relating to moisture content (reg 8 DSF Regs). At the same time, it also became unlawful to sell MSFs that emitted smoke at a rate of 5g or more per hour and had a sulphur content of 2% or more. In addition to this, from May 2021, the supply of bituminous coal (traditional house coal) began to be phased out for use in domestic dwellings; the sale of this fuel for use for domestic burning purposes has been unlawful since May 2023.

Domestic Solid Fuels Regulations Enforcement

Currently the Domestic Solid Fuels Regulations allow a £300 Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) to be issued to fuel manufacturers, suppliers, distributors or retailers who breach the law by supplying fuels which are not compliant with the regulations. It also provides a criminal option, allowing an unlimited fine through the courts when local authorities consider this appropriate, including for repeat offenders.

Evidence suggests that there is high overall compliance with the regulations by industry, but enforcement as reported by local authorities is low²⁰. We have had reports from suppliers that the FPN amount (£300) may not be a sufficient deterrent as it is lower than the cost of joining the Ready to Burn certification scheme. The initial cost for Ready to Burn certification for wood is around £550 with annual recertification fees of around £400 (both including VAT) for larger businesses. Smaller businesses pay around £325 pa, with charities paying around £260 pa. For MSFs, the new fuel application fee is £950 + VAT, and the annual recertification fee is £475 + VAT.

We are consulting on increasing the penalty for breaches of the Domestic Solid Fuels Regulations by suppliers. The current penalty is £300, we are proposing increasing this up to £2000. This is proportionate to the certification fee and the harm caused by poor air

²⁰ [Evaluation of the Air Quality \(Domestic Solid Fuels Standards\) \(England\) Regulations 2020 and Monitoring of domestic burning practices in the UK - AQ1043](#)

quality. We are also considering introducing an increased penalty for repeat offenders to deter ongoing non-compliance.

We would expect enforcement to increase under this option, likely leading to an increase in the number of FPNs issued. This option would require new legislation to amend the Domestic Solid Fuels Regulations.

We would expect the direct benefits in terms of air quality to be low in terms of kilotonnes of PM_{2.5}. In general, we would expect this to drive up compliance with the current regulations.

The proposed penalty applies to contraventions of the Domestic Solid Fuels Regulations and any future extension of them.

Territorial application

The Air Quality (Domestic Solid Fuel) (England) Regulations 2020 apply in England only. There are currently no equivalent restrictions in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland. The Welsh Government is interested in consultation responses on this measure for information purposes as there are no regulations of this kind in Wales and is not looking to progress policy on this immediately following consultation. DAERA and DfE are content to join a fact-finding consultation on this measure to support policy development in Northern Ireland but are not looking to progress policy on this immediately following consultation. The most likely territorial extent of the increased fixed penalty notice under the extended Regulations is England only.

Questions on proposed domestic Solid Fuels Regulations Enforcement

31. To what extent do you agree that increasing the fixed penalty notice for suppliers under the Domestic Solid Fuels Regulations would deter non-compliance?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; Don't know].

Please provide further detail to support your response. [Open text box]

32. What do you think the cost of a fixed penalty notice should be for suppliers breaching the Domestic Solid Fuels Regulations?

- £300
- £750
- £1000
- £2000

33. To what extent do you agree that an increased penalty for repeat offenders should be introduced to deter continued non-compliance?

[Strongly agree; agree; neither agree nor disagree; disagree; strongly disagree; Don't know].

Please provide further detail to support your response. [
[Open text box]

Additional evidence

34. Do you have any additional evidence, data, or relevant information that should be considered by Defra to inform the development of these policies?
[Open text box]

Glossary

This Glossary provides definitions for technical and other terms used in this consultation.

Approved appliance – an appliance which has been certified as meeting relevant emission limits, and which is allowed for burning unauthorised fuels in a Smoke Control Area (SCA)

Approved fuel – (or an authorised fuel) is a fuel which has been certified as meeting relevant emission and sulphur content limits, and is allowed for use on any appliance in a Smoke Control Area (SCA).

Coal – a naturally mined mineral product which is burned to generate heat. This includes bituminous coal, also known as traditional house coal. Sale of this type of coal is banned for domestic use.

Concentrations – the amount of a pollutant present in the atmosphere at any given time (may be averaged over a period of time, for example 24 hours or 1 year).

Ecolabel - the practice of marking products with a distinctive label so that consumers know that their manufacture conforms to recognized environmental standards

Emissions – the amount of a pollutant released into the atmosphere.

Fine particulate matter / PM_{2.5} – airborne particles (solid or liquid) which have an aerodynamic diameter of no more than 2.5 micrometres in any dimension.

Manufactured Solid Fuels (MSFs) – a fuel manufactured from coal, wood, plant-derived materials, waxes or petroleum products with other ingredients, for the purposes of combustion in domestic premises in England, but does not include an exempt fuel. These fuels must meet emissions standards and sulphur content limits to be sold for domestic use in England.

Open fire – an opening in a wall or other structure of a building in which a fire is lit, usually with a chimney to remove smoke. Only authorised fuels can be used in open fires in Smoke Control Areas.

Smoke Control Area (SCA) – an area declared by a local authority under the Clean Air Act 1993, in which extra restrictions on solid fuel burning apply.

Stove/solid fuel appliance – an enclosed space heater which (in the context of this consultation) burns solid fuel to generate heat, including, for example, wood burning stoves.

Sulphur – a chemical element found in many petroleum products. Forms sulphur dioxide, an acidic gas, when burned.

Wood – a natural fuel obtained from felled trees. Must be dried to 20% moisture content or below to be sold in volumes of below 2 cubic metres in England.