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## PRESS RELEASE

**DATE:** July 21, 2009

**TO:** Media and Reporting Fire Districts  
1200 hrs. PDT

**FROM:** Dave Caprile, PIO, YRCAA

**SUBJECT: UPPER & LOWER YAKIMA COUNTY – STAGE 1 BURN BAN CALLED**

**Effective immediately, and until further notice, a Stage 1 Burn Ban is called for Yakima County – BOTH the Upper Yakima County and the Lower Yakima County.**

**Explanation:** The Air Pollution Control Officer of the Yakima Regional Clean Air Authority has called this ban due to deteriorating air quality conditions of increasing particulate content in the PM<sub>2.5</sub> range, primarily due to wildfires in Canada, outdoor burning activity and inadequate ventilation, thereby impeding dilution and dispersion. These conditions are expected to last at least through Friday afternoon and very possibly the weekend as well.

Please Note: This applies to all areas of Yakima County except for Yakama Indian Reservation lands, which are overseen by the Environmental Protection Agency, and fall under the Federal Air Rules for Reservations (FARR) regulations.

Burn Ban conditions will continue to be re-evaluated on a daily basis.

Note: The maximum allowable level of airborne particulates in the 2.5 micron range (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) under the current standard imposed by the Clean Air Act is 35µg/m<sup>3</sup>. The new standard went into effect on December 18, 2006, raising the standard (by lowering the tolerated amount) from the previous limit of 65µg/m<sup>3</sup>.

**A Stage I Burn Ban** means that, until removed:

1. Agricultural burning for permit holders is prohibited
2. Residential Outdoor burning for permit holders is prohibited in all areas.
3. The use of any fireplace, uncertified wood stove or uncertified insert is prohibited unless it is the sole source of home heating. Certified wood stove, certified fireplace insert or pellet stove/insert use *is* allowed.

The Office of the Air Pollution Control Officer of the YRCAA wishes to strongly encourage *all* Yakima County residents to refrain from unnecessary wood burning until weather conditions change, allowing air conditions to improve and clear, bringing current air quality health concern under control.

For further information on Continuing Conditions and Burn Ban Status, check the Yakima Regional Clean Air Authority website at: <http://www.co.yakima.wa.us/cleanair/> or call THE YRCAA office at: (509) 834-2050