

# CLEANER BURNS WITH YOUR WOODSTOVE

Michelle Davis  
EPA Tribal Coordinator  
907/271-3434

# WAYS THAT WOOD STOVES MIGHT IMPACT AIR QUALITY

## ◉ Out doors

- ◉ Inversions
- ◉ Drifting smoke
- ◉ Everyone's problem

## ◉ Indoors

- ◉ Children and elderly suffer most
- ◉ Back drafts when fire starts.
- ◉ Smoke enters the house when the door is opened to fiddle with the fire.

# HOW YOU START YOUR FIRE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

- ◉ Most particulates released right at first.
- ◉ Cool temps may cause creosote build-up
- ◉ Creosote contributes to stack fires
- ◉ Cold start up fires can lead to back draft
- ◉ Every time you open the stove door, you let smoke into your home.

# PROBLEM

- Everyone thinks they know how to start a fire.

# NEW WAY IS AN OLD WAY

- ◉ Top down burning
- ◉ Lots of great web sites on this.
- ◉ Here's my fave sites.
  - <http://www.woodheat.org/>
    - <http://www.woodheat.org/tips/topdownsteps.htm>
    - <http://www.hearth.com/econtent/index.php/forums/viewforum/2/>
  - Big thank you to woodheat.org for the photo essay and text on top down burning. Great source of information!



**1. Place the bottom pieces.**

These will be the largest pieces in the load. They must be split, dry firewood.



**2. Place a layer smaller pieces across the main logs.**  
These pieces are split smaller. The secret to a successful top-down fire is making the pieces for each layer a little smaller than the one below.



**Place another layer of still smaller pieces across the second layer.**  
•These pieces are only about an inch across.





#### **4. Now place some fine kindling.**

I cut short blocks of cedar only about eight inches long and let them season well. Then I split them up as I need them. Blocks that short split easily and the little pieces are handier for placing in the firebox.



Newspaper knots stay put better than bunched sheets. Roll up single sheets corner to corner and tie a sloppy knot in the tube.



**Stuff about five knots in on top of the fine kindling.**  
I like to grab them all in one hand and stuff them in while holding down the kindling with the other hand.





Nice video showing time lapse of top down fire. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RD0exR5rl\\_s&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RD0exR5rl_s&feature=related)