

PETERSHAM BOARD OF HEALTH

Regulations on Outdoor Wood Burning Boilers

(effective September 12, 2005)

Section 1. Findings and Purpose

Whereas outdoor wood burning boilers have been shown, because of their design, to emit significantly high quantities of particulate matter and other noxious fumes; and

Whereas health, safety and nuisance problems have arisen from the use of these boilers; and

Whereas poor management and poor fuel exacerbate the effects of the smoke created by the firing of these units;

The Board of Health of the Town of Petersham, pursuant to Section 31 and 31C of Chapter 111 of the Massachusetts General Law, hereby adopts these regulations in order to minimize the human health hazards resulting from the smoke and noxious fumes emitted by outdoor wood burning boilers, to encourage proper techniques in the use and location of these boilers, and to promote the public comfort and convenience.

These regulations shall be effective September 12, 2005.

Section 2. Definitions

- a) **Outdoor Wood Burning Boiler:** a wood fired boiler, surrounded by a water jacket in an insulated freestanding shed with a smoke stack and used to heat water that is carried by underground pipes to provide heat to a building.
- b) **Wood fuel:** all wood intended to be used as fuel, including but not limited to trees, cordwood, logs, lumber, sawdust, and wood from manufacturing processes (butt offs, shavings, turnings, sander dust) wood pellets, slabs, bark, chips, waste pallets. This definition DOES NOT include chemically treated with any preservative, paint or oil.
- c) **Seasoned wood:** wood that has been cut a year and dried at least 6 months.

Section 3. Requirements

- A. A permit is required from the Board of Health to install an outdoor wood burning boiler. The permit process shall include submission of a written application form and payment of the permit fee established by the Board. In addition permit applicants must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Board of Health that they understand the requirements for proper installation and operation of an outdoor wood burning boiler. The application must be accompanied by a map indicating proposed boiler location in relation to other buildings and separating distances from boiler to all buildings and outbuildings on site and all neighboring houses from boiler to all buildings and outdoor buildings and outbuildings on site and all neighboring houses within 400 feet, together with distances to all roads adjacent to site, and distances from boiler to woods, brush, and flammable structures.
- B. No boiler shall be installed within 50 feet of a house it is serving or within 200 feet of any other house.
- C. Boilers located between 200 and 400 feet of a house other than the one being served must have a smokestack height of at least 50% of the height of the eaves line of the highest abutting residence plus 2 feet.
- D. Boilers located within 400 feet of another house may only be operated during the heating season, which shall be for the purpose of these regulations to be September 1 to June 1
- E. Manufacturer's recommendations for the installation and use of the unit must be followed.
- F. Only dry, seasoned, untreated wood fuel may be burned in the boiler unit
- G. Boilers installed before the effective date of these regulations shall exempt from Sections 3A, B, C and D. of these regulations. However, the Board of Health shall have the right to take appropriate enforcement or other action; in accordance with Chapter 111 of the General Laws, with respect to any such boiler that it determines constitutes a nuisance.

Section 4. Penalties

Any violation of these regulations shall be punished by a penalty of \$50 for the first offense. Each day of violation shall constitute a separate offense. Any succeeding day of violation shall be punished by a penalty of \$250 per day of offense.