



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SECTION

### EHS Circular Letter 2010-81

To: Local Health Directors  
Chief Sanitarians

From: Suzanne Blancaflor, MS, MPH, Chief, Environmental Health Section  
Brian Toal, MSPH, Supervisor, Environmental & Occupational Health Assessment Program

Date: December 23, 2010

Subject: Wood Smoke Guidance Document and Training Opportunity

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The attached guidance document entitled "Response to Wood Smoke Complaints in Connecticut" was prepared to assist local health departments (LHDs) in their efforts to respond to wood smoke complaints in their towns and districts. The document was prepared jointly by a workgroup composed of staff and representatives from: the Connecticut Environmental Health Association (CEHA), Connecticut Association of Directors of Health (CADH), Connecticut Department of Public Health (CTDPH), Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (CTDEP), Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection (CTDCP) and the Office of the Chief State's Attorney. The guidance document was prepared as a direct result of requests from CEHA and CADH to Commissioner Galvin, requesting guidance on how to respond to wood smoke complaints.

This guidance document lays out the general authority and responsibility of various agencies regarding wood smoke complaints. It covers a broad range of smoke emitting devices/activities including: outdoor wood burning furnaces, wood stoves, fireplaces, fire pits (chimineas) and open burning such as brush burning. The document identifies the proper lead or initial responding agency for each type of wood smoke complaint. In reading the document you will see that LHDs are not being asked to take the lead in all cases and we try to spell out where and when their involvement is most appropriate. In general the guidance covers the following topics:

- overview of roles and responsibilities
- conducting investigations
- enforcement options

In issuing this guidance document we do not want to infer that LHDs must respond with a site visit and investigation, even for those smoke emitting devices where LHDs may be the lead responding agency. As always, LHDs are encouraged to use professional judgment in deciding if a particular complaint warrants an actual investigation. In addition, this document details where LHDs are encouraged to refer complaints to other agencies where appropriate.

We will be conducting a training on this guidance document on January 27<sup>th</sup> at Rentschler Field in East Hartford from 9am – 12noon. Please email Kathy Graff at [kathy.graff@ct.gov](mailto:kathy.graff@ct.gov) to register for this training. If you have questions about the guidance document or the training, please contact Brian Toal at 860-509-7741 or [brian.toal@ct.gov](mailto:brian.toal@ct.gov).

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