

Other issues raised in feedback on the draft bylaw

Impacts of air pollution on human health

Summary of feedback

1. The Auckland Regional Public Health Service (“ARPHS”) provided information on the health impacts of air pollution, particularly from small airborne particulates (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}). ARPHS also had concerns about the health impacts of using un-flued gas heaters for households.
2. One local board mentioned that more scientific data on air pollution in Auckland would be useful.

Staff comments

3. The key reason for re-establishing the regional rules for indoor domestic fires is to address the significant health impacts of small airborne particulates.
4. Auckland Council’s proposed measures would address levels of PM_{2.5} as well as levels of PM₁₀.

The council could “do more” than the measures in the draft bylaw

Summary of feedback

5. Several submitters considered that the council should do more to manage emissions from indoor domestic fires, such as banning the burning of coal and phasing out the use of older fireplaces and solid-fuel open fires.
6. Some submissions noted that a bylaw could include measures for managing air pollution from other sources, such as transport and industry.

Staff comments

7. In Auckland, there is some natural attrition in the use of older fireplaces.
8. A transition period for new measures in the future would be important.
9. Both domestic fires and vehicles contribute to Auckland’s levels of small particulates from domestic fires and vehicles.

The cost of replacing older fireplaces with new technology

Summary of feedback

10. Several submissions noted that it would be expensive to replace an old fireplace with a modern fireplace or alternative home heating technology.
11. They noted that if the council introduces new restrictions in the future, they should be phased in gradually to allow households time to replace their old fireplaces.

Staff comments

12. A transition period to any new measures in the future would be important.

13. The council could investigate ways of encouraging households to upgrade their old fireplaces.

Non-regulatory approaches that would complement the bylaw

Summary of feedback

14. Some submitters noted the importance of education about the effective use of indoor domestic fires, including using the right fuels and dry firewood; and about the negative impacts of smoky vehicles.
15. Five of the 13 local boards noted the importance of public education for the effectiveness of the bylaw and to increase compliance.

Staff comments

16. Auckland Council could provide information to customers about clean burning practices through several avenues:
 - as part of the building consent process
 - including information with the council's annual rates notice
 - by working proactively with businesses in Auckland's home heating sector
17. Auckland Council could partner with other agencies and programmes that promote healthy homes.

Summary of Hearing Panel recommendations

18. Note that:
 - Staff will use the feedback provided by submitters and local boards in future policy work on air quality issues
 - There will be some public communication about an air quality action plan at a later date
 - Any changes to financial assistance programmes would be subject to a governance decision.