

NORTH CAROLINA WOODSTOVE CHANGEOUT PROGRAM TELECONFERENCE TRANSCRIPTION

Thursday, April 26 11 AM – 11:30 AM

Brenda Olsen:

- Welcome, and thank you for joining us today. I am Brenda Olsen, Chief Mission Officer for the Southeast Region of the American Lung Association. The American Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through education, advocacy and research. For more than 110 years, we have led the fight for healthy lungs and healthy air.
- As a part of that fight we are pleased today to announce the official launch of the North Carolina Woodstove Changeout Program. The Woodstove Changeout program works to improve indoor and outdoor air quality by removing old, high polluting, low efficiency wood stoves and qualified fireplaces by replacing them with cleaner burning, more efficient EPA-certified woodstoves and hydronic heaters or heat pumps.
- The program covers residents of Cherokee, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Mecklenburg and Swain counties and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. The American Lung Association has long been committed to reducing resident's exposure to wood smoke. Since 2010, the Lung Association has successfully implemented many woodstove changeout programs across the country.
- Our speakers on the call today include:
 - Michelle Edwards, Program Coordinator for the American Lung Association
 - Janice Nolen, American Lung Association Assistant Vice President, National Policy

- North Carolina Division of Air Quality Director, Keith Bamberger
 - Stephen Binder, Participating Retailer
 - Phillip Haigler, Woodstove Changeout Voucher Recipient
- We will be taking questions at the conclusion of the speakers' remarks. Michelle will lead us off.

Michelle Edwards:

- Thank you, Brenda.

- I am Michelle Edwards, Wood Stove Change Out Coordinator for the American Lung Association and am pleased to be a part of the team implementing this important project.

- I would like to take a couple of minutes to describe the program and provide a few details of how the program works.

- The wood stove changeout program lowers particle pollution emissions in the area and supports local retail stove businesses who are working with the American Lung Association.

- Participating retailers include: Albert's Clean Sweep in Waynesville, Fireside Hearth and Home Shop in Murphy, Hearth and Patio in Charlotte, Mountain Air Mechanical Contractors in Arden and Quality Air in Asheville.

- Homeowners who live in the project area and own a non-EPA certified woodstove or qualified fireplace can apply for a voucher. Depending on changeout selection, vouchers range from \$300 to \$10,000. Details are provided on the fact sheet which can be found at [lung dot org backslash woodstove](http://lung.org/backslash/woodstove).

- Applications for the vouchers are available online at [lung dot org backslash woodstove](http://lung.org/backslash/woodstove) and must be submitted directly to the American Lung Association via physical mail. Once applicants receive their voucher, they will have four weeks to enter into a purchase agreement with one of the participating retailers. The retailer then installs the new stove and ensures the old stove is made inoperable. The number of vouchers is limited.



- Next, I would like to introduce Janice Nolen to speak about the health impact of particle pollution.

Janice Nolen:

- Thanks, Michelle.
- Good morning. As Michelle stated, I am Janice Nolen, American Lung Association Assistant Vice President, National Policy.
- Particle pollution is made of soot or tiny particles that come from burning fuels, including coal-fired power plants, diesel engines, wildfires and wood-burning devices. These particles are so small that they can lodge deep in the lungs and trigger asthma attacks, heart attacks and strokes. They can even cause lung cancer, and early death.
- Many of these pollutants can worsen air quality indoors and outdoors. For example, in some places wood-burning is the major source of particle pollution as we found in our “State of the Air” report released last week.
- Wood smoke adds to the outdoor levels of carbon monoxide as well as increasing indoor concentrations. Nitrogen oxides harm health indoors and outdoors and helps create particle pollution. The gases of volatile organic compounds include harmful pollutants and contribute to creating ozone pollution.
- Wood smoke emissions include carcinogens and hazardous air pollutants, including benzene and formaldehyde.
- Wood smoke adds carbon dioxide and methane to the air, two pollutants that contribute significantly to climate change.
- Many people in North Carolina face greater risk from breathing these pollutants, including children, older adults and people with lung disease. We are glad to be able to take steps to help protect their health.



- The mission of the American Lung Association is to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease. We see this North Carolina Woodstove Changeout Program as important steps toward achieving our mission. This program will:
 - Improve local air quality indoors and out and improve family lung health and prevent harm by reducing indoor and outdoor air pollution, all while warming homes for less money. We are glad to be a partner in this project.

Moderator/Brenda Olsen:

- Thank you, Janice. Our next speaker is the director of the North Carolina Division of Air Quality, Keith Bamberger

Keith Bamberger:

- Thanks Brenda. Being in western North Carolina, we're aware that heating with wood may be for many people, the most economical sustainable way to heat their homes. At the same time, we're also aware that heating with wood can be a safety and health risk. But we also know that many of these risks can be solved by using updated equipment and good safety practice.
- At the North Carolina Division of Air Quality, we monitor the air all the time. We try to make sure it's healthy. And each day we forecast the health of the air using the air quality index, AQI color code. For instance, green is good air quality which is what we have today. Yellow means moderate which means there is some air pollution in the air usually but not enough to affect most people's health. And when it gets worse than that to an orange air quality day, we'll put out an air quality alert and we tell people the air is unhealthy for people sensitive to air pollution.
- We suggest people on those orange air quality days who are sensitive to air pollution, spend less time being active outdoors in the late afternoon which is when our air quality gets worse. The AQI gives people the opportunity and tools to protect their own health.



- The valleys of North Carolina are really fortunate that the air quality is usually good or has a green air quality index. But the valleys can also experience a weather phenomenon called a temperature inversion. A temperature inversion causes the air pollution to be trapped overnight close to the ground, in particular in valleys. Wood smoke from people's chimneys can contribute to these elevated particulate levels during these events.
- We don't have monitors in every valley however so if you're ever outside and notice the heavy smoke smell or you can't see across your valley, you just have to understand that the air may not be healthy to breathe.
- The North Carolina Woodstove Changeout Program is going to provide people in Western North Carolina with the opportunity to protect the health of their neighbors and communities.
- We've seen that changing out one dirty woodstove with a new woodstove is the equivalent to taking about five old diesel trucks off the road. And of course, replacing it with natural gas, electric or propane heat pump has an even greater benefit.
- The North Carolina Division of Air Quality is excited to support the American Lung Association's North Carolina Woodstove Changeout Program is giving people an opportunity to replace old wood stoves with new technologies that have far fewer health risks. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this program.

Moderator/Brenda Olsen:

- Thank you, Keith.
- Phillip Haigler, a voucher recipient and participant of the North Carolina Woodstove Changeout program will now speak about their experience.

Phillip Haigler:

- Thanks Stephen. I am very happy to share our experience with the NC Wood Stove Changeout Program. We applied for our voucher in March and within 2 weeks we had our voucher in hand to work with our participating retailer. The



application process was quick and easy. The retailer was very helpful in assisting us select a new stove that meets our home and heating needs. I would recommend that anyone with an older qualifying stove or fireplace use this program to purchase a newer stove.

Moderator/Britney Reddick/Brenda Olsen:

- Our final speaker is one of the participating retailers in the changeout program, Stephen Binder, from Fireside Hearth and Home Shop in Murphy, NC.

Stephen Binder:

- Hello. It is my pleasure to have our store as a participating retailer in the NC Wood Stove Changeout Program. Our store is currently working with several voucher recipients to replace their older inefficient polluting stoves with cleaner more efficient units. This program has been a HUGE help to those people and has been great for our business following our normal burn season. Our store and staff are delighted to be part of a program that helps people and improves the air in our state.

Moderator

- We will open the call to questions from listeners at this time. Please state your name and affiliation.
- If there are no questions, we would like to thank you for joining us for today's call. For any additional questions or follow up, please feel free to contact us at 470-233-7030. For more information on the program, please visit, [lung dot org backslash woodstove](http://lung.org/backslash/woodstove). Thank you.

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