

# Improving indoor air quality

## Top tips for improving air quality in your home:

- **Avoid smoking** inside or near your home
- **Don't burn wood or coal**
- **Avoid burning incense or candles**
- **Ventilate your kitchen while cooking**, if you are able to do so, especially when cooking meat, deep-fat-frying, or using gas hobs or air fryers
- **Ventilate to avoid steam or moisture build-up** in bathrooms and kitchens
- **Dust surfaces** regularly to limit build-up of allergens
- **Use ecological low-chemical cleaning products** ('low-VOC' content)
- **Ventilate when painting or redecorating**
- **Ensure your boiler is well-maintained** and running efficiently
- **Avoid opening windows during traffic** if these face onto busy roads

**Camden's Well and Warm service** provides free home energy advice visits to help make your home warmer, more comfortable, and help reduce your energy bills. To check your eligibility, please call the Green Camden Helpline on **0800 801 738**

**WISH Plus referral hub** is a way for Camden residents to access a range of warmth, income, safety and health services. To refer yourself or another person, please visit <https://www.camden.gov.uk/wish-plus>

# Air quality and wood-burning

## The facts:

- Wood burning in homes is the **biggest source of health-damaging fine particulates (PM<sub>2.5</sub>)** in the UK
- **PM<sub>2.5</sub> causes lung and heart diseases, including lung cancer**
- Open fireplaces and wood stoves **triple the level of PM<sub>2.5</sub> inside homes**
- An open fireplace emits **4,000 times more PM<sub>2.5</sub> pollution than a gas boiler**. Even the most efficient wood stoves still produce hundreds of times more pollution than gas boilers
- Camden is a smoke control area and **you could be fined for producing smoke from a chimney** or using unauthorised (non-smokeless) fuels in an open fireplace or non-exempt appliance

For more info on wood burning, air quality and the law, visit <https://www.camden.gov.uk/wood-burning-stoves#dfmo>



**Please choose to protect Camden's health by not burning wood or coal at home unless you do not have any other source of heating**

# Improving Indoor Air Quality at Home



**Air pollution can affect our health at any stage in our lives**

**It's not just a problem outside – air pollution is found in our homes too**

**This guide will help you to reduce air pollution inside your home, making it a safer and healthier space**

## What is air pollution?

'Air pollution' means **gases and particles in the air that are harmful to health**. Air pollution can be found outside and inside our homes.

Children, older people, pregnant women, and people with existing health conditions are most vulnerable to the health effects of air pollution. The most important types of air pollution are:

**Nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)** – a gas produced when fuels are burned in boilers, gas stoves, and other appliances



**Particulate matter (PM)** – small particles in the air produced when fuels and other materials are burned in fireplaces and stoves, and when oily or fatty foods are heated



**Volatile organic compounds (VOCs)** – gases contained in chemical cleaning products, sprays, paints and new furniture



- **Tobacco smoke** – the most harmful source of indoor air pollution
- **Dampness and mould** – although not strictly a 'pollutant', high humidity and dampness can lead to mould growth and the presence of other harmful biological contaminants

## What is indoor air quality?

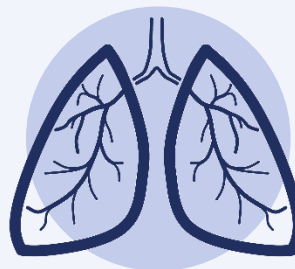
**Indoor air quality is the overall 'cleanliness' of the air inside buildings.** The more air pollution, the worse the indoor air quality.

We spend approximately 90% of our time indoors, so poor indoor air quality can damage health, and may also lead to fatigue, reduced levels of concentration, and lower rates of productivity.

## Air pollution and health

Breathing in polluted air can have **short-term and long-term impacts on our health.**

Short-term impacts of exposure to air pollution include **respiratory effects such as wheezing, coughing and asthma symptoms.** These may be worse for people with existing health conditions.



Longer-term health impacts **may not be immediately visible and may affect us later in life.** These include:

- Asthma
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Heart disease
- Lung cancer

Frequent or continuous exposure to **air pollution can harm lung development in children** and can increase the risk of developing asthma or other respiratory health conditions, as well as cardiovascular disease (CVD) and lung cancer.

**Air pollution affects everyone's health,** and is thought to cause up to 36,000 early deaths each year in the United Kingdom, including 4,100 in London. This is almost **30 times more than the number of people killed in road traffic accidents.**

The good news is that air quality is getting better in Camden, but we still have much more work to do to achieve the World Health Organization (WHO) air quality standards.

To find out more about what Camden Council is doing to improve air quality, and about how you can help to reduce air pollution and your exposure to it, scan the QR code below, or visit <https://www.camden.gov.uk/air-quality>

