

Randy Fifrick

From: Jeffrey, Robert [rjeffrey@mt.gov]
Sent: Monday, December 31, 2007 12:22 PM
To: Randy Fifrick
Cc: Habeck, Bob; Wolfe, Debra; Merchant, Eric; Lea Jordan; Morgan Farrell
Subject: RE: Ravalli Co Air Quality

Hi Randy-

Thanks for your questions and sorry for my delayed reply - the demands of the holiday season caught up to me after our Dec. 12th meeting in Hamilton. Before I comment on your wood stove covenant, I would like to caveat my reply and state that I assume the subdivision review and approval process in Ravalli County stresses energy conservation as a very high priority, if not the highest, and it specifically discusses energy conservation in new home/business/commercial construction. In my opinion, it's purely a matter of common sense to stress energy conservation first before one decides on the selection of heating and cooling systems. With those comments in mind, I would slightly revise the text of your wood stove covenant to read as follows:

Wood Stoves. The County recommends that home owners refrain from installing wood stoves if possible. The county further recommends that wood and other biomass burning stoves not be used as the primary heat source. If a homeowner chooses to burn wood as a back-up heat source, the county strongly encourages them to install an EPA-certified wood stove as the best option to reduce air pollution and more specifically, to install an EPA-certified pellet stove. More information on low emission, EPA-certified wood stoves is available at <http://www.epa.gov/woodstoves/index.html>. The State of Montana offers a generous Alternative Energy Systems Tax Credit to offset the cost of purchasing and installing a low emission wood or biomass combustion device such as a pellet or wood stove. Besides the tax credit for qualifying wood stoves, individual Montana residents can claim a tax credit for energy conservation investments made to a home or other building. For more information on the energy conservation tax credits and ways to save energy, please see the *Warm Hearts, Warm Homes* webpage (<http://deq.mt.gov/Energy/warmhomes/index.asp>) on the Montana Department of Environmental Quality's website. (*Effects on the Natural Environment*)

Thanks for sharing this wood stove covenant statement with us. On the subject of education, DEQ is contemplating the revision of one of our older educational brochures on how to properly operate a wood stove to reduce air pollution. If DEQ were to print copies of a revised wood burning brochure, would the Ravalli County planning department consider including a copy of that brochure in their correspondence with building permit applicants? Thanks for partnering with DEQ as we work on improving and protecting the air quality in the Bitterroot Valley. If you have any questions, please contact me. Bob

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From: Randy Fifrick [mailto:rfifrick@ravallcounty.mt.gov]
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2007 1:49 PM
To: Jeffrey, Robert

1/16/2008

Subject: Ravalli Co Air Quality

Hi Robert,

I attended your initial meeting Wednesday afternoon in the Commissioners room. I work primarily on subdivision review for the county. Currently we include the following covenant in the conditional approval of new subdivisions:

Wood Stoves. The County recommends that home owners install EPA-certified wood stoves to reduce air pollution. It is recommended that wood burning stoves are not the primary heat source. More information is available at <http://www.epa.gov/woodstoves/index.html>. The State of Montana offers an Alternative Energy Systems Credit (<http://mt.gov/Revenue/energyconservation.asp>) for the cost of purchasing and installing a low emission wood or biomass combustion device such as a pellet or wood stove. (*Effects on the Natural Environment*)

Currently we can not do anything more than recommend this condition as our legal counsel has advised us anything more would be to close to a building code. The Planning Dept feels like education is important aspect of improving air quality in Ravalli County and we hope that this statement helps to educate the public.

What do you think of this statement and is there anything else we could do through our subdivision review process to mitigate the effects of new development on air quality in the county.

Thanks,

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1/16/2008