

French ecology minister slams 'ridiculous' log fire ban

December 9 2014



The Ile-de-France region, which includes the French capital and seven other districts, has issued an order stating that residents in Paris will no longer be allowed to use their fireplaces from January 1 next year to fight against air pollution

French Ecology Minister Segolene Royal said Tuesday a ban on using open fireplaces in the Paris region was "excessive" and vowed to reverse the anti-pollution measure before it comes into force next year.

The Ile-de-France region, which includes the French capital and seven other districts, has issued an order stating that residents will no longer be allowed to use their fireplaces from January 1 to fight air pollution.

A further 435 towns and cities will be banned from using open fireplaces, although they will still be allowed to burn [wood](#) in clean, closed-combustion chimney places.

"I will have this decision, which does not go in the right direction, changed," Royal said on France 2 television, adding that the ban was "a bit ridiculous".

The smoke created from wood burning has been proven to contribute to air pollution and to public health problems such as asthma and other respiratory ailments.

Paris itself suffers from regular spikes in [air pollution](#). In March, the problem got so bad that authorities banned half of all cars from the streets and made public transport free for several days.

But the decision has sparked anger among residents and chimney sweeps.

"I was very surprised, particularly by the figures used," Royal said, referring to the regional environment and energy department's statement that wood burning makes up 23 percent of damaging small [particle emissions](#) in Ile-de-France—the same proportion as vehicles.

But Airparif, which monitors [air](#) quality in and around Paris, has said that 39 percent of fine particle emissions come from cars and only four percent from wood burning.

"You have to be a little reasonable. I am not in favour of a society of

prohibitions," Royal said.

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