

CLEAN AIR CANBERRA

2024 ACT ELECTION SURVEY

[Clean Air Canberra](#) (CAC) is conducting a nine question survey in the leadup to the next ACT Election. The aim of the survey is to inform voters where political parties and individual candidates stand on the issue of air quality in Canberra. The results of the survey will be posted on CAC's website and Facebook page.

We appreciate your participation and request you complete and return the survey to CAC by Friday 23 August 2024.

1. Name: Ann Bray and Peter Strong

2. Political Party: Strong Independents

3. Electorate: Kurrajong

4. The [2023 ACT State of the Environment Report](#) by the Office of the ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment reports wood heaters are responsible for 75% of Canberra's fine particle air pollution.

Do you accept this advice from the Commissioner?
(Place an X in the appropriate box)

Yes No

More accurately, the report qualifies this by saying up to 75 percent of fine particle air pollution can be attributed to wood heaters in the cooler months. Obviously even smaller figures than this is not acceptable.

5. A peer reviewed study by researchers from the Australian National University and the Centre for Safe Air and reported in the [Medical Journal of Australia](#) in 2023 found smoke from wood heaters causes as many as 63 premature deaths per year in the ACT. The study also found the estimated conservative annual equivalent cost of deaths was as much as \$136 million.

Do you accept these findings?
(Place an X in the appropriate box)

Yes No

More accurately the report qualifies this number as being in the colder years.

Continue

6. A 2021 survey of 25 thousand people by [Asthma Australia](#) found:

People exposed to woodfire heaters are largely unable to protect themselves. Only 28% of the general population and 18% of people with asthma said they are able to protect themselves from wood fire heater smoke when present.

People in Australia, particularly those with asthma, are supportive of regulations to reduce the impact of woodfire heaters. More than three quarters of the general population (77%) agree that woodfire heaters should not be allowed in urban or built up areas and over half agree they should be phased out (55%) or banned (54%).

Support for regulation was even higher amongst people with asthma with 84% supporting regulation of woodfire heaters in urban or built up areas, 71% supporting a scheme to phase them out and 65% agreeing they should be banned.

Do you support the findings of the Asthma Australia survey.
(Place an X in the appropriate box)

Yes No

7. In 2022 an ACT Government [Your Say survey](#) on community attitudes to wood heaters in Canberra found;

Almost 30 per cent of respondents were frequently or sometimes impacted by smoke from wood heaters.

Most of those who complained about wood smoke were dissatisfied by the result as nothing changed.

Most of the respondents were unaware of the current regulation on wood heaters in the ACT.

Just over half of respondents support a gradual phase out of wood heaters across all ACT suburbs.

Only 11% of respondents owned a wood heater.

The majority of wood heater owners used them for emotional and aesthetic reasons rather than out of necessity.

Do you support the findings of this survey?

(Place an X in the appropriate box)

Yes No

Continue

8. In March 2023 the ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment released the report, ['Can Canberra 'Burn Right Tonight'](#) or is there 'no safe level of air pollution'?

The report found;

Wood heaters are responsible for the majority of breaches of air quality national standards in the ACT

Wood heater emissions and efficiency standards and best practice management are not sufficient.

Environmental officers can only rely on a visual estimate of woodsmoke breaches. This sighting is heavily dependent on light levels and the peak smoke level varies throughout the day and night.

There is limited evidence that education programs have improved air quality in Canberra to a level where standards are not exceeded.

There is limited evidence of the effectiveness of the Wood Heater Replacement Program in either improving air quality in the ACT or changing attitudes towards the appropriateness of wood heaters in an urban environment.

While wood heaters are restricted from installation in several suburbs across Canberra they can still be installed in Tuggeranong where wood heaters were responsible for 82 per cent of the daily PM2.5 exceedances between 2015 and 2018.

Do you support the findings of the report by the ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment?

(Place an X in the appropriate box)

Yes No

9. In the report referred to in Question 8, the ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment recommended, among other things, phasing out wood heaters in suburban Canberra. On 24 August 2023, and in response to the Commissioner's report, the ACT Government announced wood heaters [will be phased out in suburban Canberra by 2045](#).

Do you support the decision by the ACT Government to phase out wood heaters in suburban Canberra?

(Place an X in the appropriate box)

Yes No

Continue

Your Comments (250 word limit): Strong Independents will always follow the science, and there are a number of highly reputable research reports here. We would note that of the wood fire heater owners, 57% said they would never consider removing them. We would like to see the continuation of incentives by the Government for their removal?

Please return your completed survey to Clean Air
Canberra. E: no2woodsmoke@gmail.com