

Episode 28. Part A: “Doing the same thing over and over, and expecting a different outcome, is the definition of insanity” Dedicated to one of our own who is now “anecdotally” harmed by wood smoke. We are expecting a different outcome, by ending what is done.

Part 1 of 2. We are optimistic. We expect a different outcome. If we all own PM 2.5 monitors, residential wood burning will be entirely shut down, residence by residence, soon. We know our rights as neighbors of wood burners are universal human rights, the rights of each of us to breathe clean air. If relatively clean air exists in each of our neighborhoods, under normal circumstances, with no wood burning, that is a baseline that can be measured. When residential wood smoke particulates periodically, regularly, are emitted when wood is burned by our neighbors, and those particulates, which are 90% PM 2.5, of 2.5 micrometer size, the perfect size to infiltrate the human lung and cause a cascade of health problems infiltrate our yards and infiltrate our houses, our human rights are violated. The level of particulates rises high above the healthy baseline of our neighborhoods, at the times wood is burned by our neighbors. The wood burning industry and individual residential wood burners who are sued can say, in the courts of law, what is your evidence that my wood burning emission particulates, PM 2.5, caused harm to you? What is the harm? The answer is: We don’t want our sicknesses to be the proof of harm. We don’t want to wait until the harm manifests itself in our bodies as illness and death, to say there is harm to us, the neighbors of residential wood burners. We don’t want to sue in court after we develop an illness. We want the preemptive action of ending residential wood burning and its particulate emissions before PM 2.5 actually causes the harm that scientific studies, statistical studies, and medical studies have shown for years that PM 2.5 causes to human health.

The form of the harm is detected by neighbors’ PM 2.5 monitors. One monitor, the PurpleAir PM 2.5 monitor, is so reliable it is used on U S Environmental Protection Agency Fire & Smoke Maps alongside EPA’s \$100,000 PM 2.5 monitors. Neighbors can own one for \$249, which is one price neighbors of residential wood burners pay. What is the outcome of owning a PM 2.5 monitor if it can’t be used yet as evidence to shut down a residential wood burner? Neighbors of residential wood burners keep buying PM 2.5 monitors, expecting a different outcome, expecting their data to someday be used as evidence.

Episode 28 Part B: “Doing the same thing over and over, and expecting a different outcome, is the definition of insanity” Dedicated to one of our own who is now “anecdotally” harmed by wood smoke. We are expecting a different outcome, by ending what is done.

Part 2 of 2. There must be enforceable laws, probably in the form of ordinances in villages, towns, and cities, which can be used to shut down the harmful levels of PM 2.5 emitted by residential wood burners, by wood fires begun indoors and vented outside, that reach neighbors’ property and can be measured by PM 2.5 monitors. The levels detected and the amount of time the levels are high are automatically recorded on the monitors. There are World Health Organization standards of 5 micrograms per meter cubed for PM 2.5 levels, at which the emissions are considered harmful. The U S Standard is currently 12 but after hearings beginning in November 2022, the standard is optimistically expected to be lowered to 8 micrograms per meter cubed for PM 2.5 levels at which emissions are considered harmful. Asthma Australia and other organizations have stated that no level of woodsmoke is harmless. Using neighbors’ monitors doesn’t require inspecting residential wood burners’ homes or appliances, making enforcement of these new laws against residential wood burning routine and cost effective.

Currently, wood stoves are certified by the EPA as emitting “safer” levels of PM 2.5. Those “safer” wood stoves emit PM 2.5 at harmful levels, as the PM 2.5 monitors of neighbors attest every day. The wood stove industry has a hand in setting those standards, a monopoly on dirty air. The wood stove industry representatives have made profits off the sickness and death of neighbors of residential wood burners for years, so they could take their profits and go into another line of business. Businesses could include solar panels, wind turbines, heat pumps, or the cleanest fossil fuel natural gas, that is serving as a bridge to solar, wind and heat pumps until they attain a greater share of the residential heating market. Wood stove exchanges should only be done to trade for natural gas furnaces or heat pumps with natural gas or electric inserts.

The “one of our own” was in the process of installing solar panels on her roof, and is valiantly providing news about efforts of her country’s government to lower the cost of natural gas this winter, to remove any excuse from residential wood burners who say they are indigent and therefore need to burn wood. The cleaner fossil fuel natural gas is a bridge to the clean residential energy sources of wind, solar and geothermal.