

EPA Chooses Not to Include Masonry Site-Built Fireplaces in New Standard

At the March 2011 annual meeting of the Hearth Patio Barbeque Association, Gil Wood, EPA Staff Lead for NSPS, went on record to indicate that they were not pursuing the inclusion of masonry site-built fireplaces in the re-writing of the New Source Performance Standard (NSPS) for New Residential Wood Heaters.

As noted in a Brick News Online article in July 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was previously advocating regulation of emissions on all masonry site-built fireplaces constructed in the U.S. This would be a major change from the original NSPS published in 1988 which exempted fireplaces. BIA along with other interested parties has worked hard to educate EPA representatives about the masonry site-built market and the implications of regulating that market.

Citing the questionable cost-effectiveness of site-testing every fireplace built, the limited number of masonry site-built fireplaces constructed in the U.S. each year, and the extent to which small business masons would potentially be affected, EPA is choosing to not include masonry site-built fireplaces in the most current draft of the regulation.

Another key component in EPA's decision was the agreement of the Masonry Contractors Association of America (MCAA) to develop a course on the proper construction and use of masonry site-built fireplaces in their existing certification program. Mr. Wood indicated that EPA was encouraged by MCAA's willingness to add a course on masonry site-built fireplaces to their curriculum and looked forward to its development and implementation.

For further information on the NSPS, please contact Chip Clark at 703-674-1531 or cclark@bia.org.