



Forestry Tasmania halts burnoffs

Updated Mon 19 Apr 2010, 3:26pm

Forestry Tasmania has admitted it needs to do more to alert residents to take the necessary precautions in smoke affected areas.

Smoke from Forestry Tasmania's regeneration burns and burns on private properties has blanketed much of the Huon Valley region in the state's south.

Ken Jeffreys from Forestry Tasmania says although it complied with government smoke regulations, the company needs to ensure people in affected areas remain informed.

"We need to give a bit more thought to how we might be able communicate more effectively with people on the ground because it is a serious issue," he said.

"We understand the health issues, we understand that it's a nuisance and we want to do whatever we can to improve that situation."

Forestry Tasmania has suspended planned regeneration burns and wants landowners in the Huon Valley region and in the state's north-west to do the same.

Paul Smith from Forestry Tasmania says many property owners have taken advantage of the end of the fire permit season to conduct burns on their properties.

"We carried out a number of regeneration burns yesterday and no doubt we've contributed to the smoke issue," he said.

"But we're faced now with the commencement of burning by a lot of private property owners, so while there is forest industry smoke around, there is smoke around by a lot of other players as well."

Asthma warning

The Asthma Foundation of Tasmania is advising people with asthma and respiratory illnesses living in the Huon Valley to protect themselves from the high levels of smoke.

Smoke from burns conducted by Forestry Tasmania and private landowners over the weekend has failed to clear due to foggy weather conditions.

The chief executive of the Asthma Foundation, Cathy Beswick says children, the elderly and those with breathing difficulties need to take extra care in the smokey conditions.

"It's particularly important for those with asthma or other respiratory illnesses to minimise their exposure if possible to the outdoor air," she said.

"If you can stay indoors and keep windows and doors closed and also to make sure that you do have your blue reliver puffer with you at all times."

Topics: asthma, respiratory-diseases, forestry, geeveston-7116, tas, burnie-7320

First posted Mon 19 Apr 2010, 2:10pm



PHOTO: Smoke rises into the sky above the Huon Valley from Forestry Tasmania's fuel-reduction burns. (Glen Clark: Audience submitted)

MAP: Geeveston 7116

