

Why the so called "complaint process" or "relief" from the "nuisance" of wood smoke, which is allowed to happen as outdoor burning under London's current by-law, simply doesn't work.

1) First of all, **the onus is put on the person burning the fire to *not* create a "nuisance"**.

Well, that is akin to asking the fox to look after the hen house, or making a bylaw that puts the onus on a smoker not to offend or injure a non smoker by policing her/himself.

Just for starters, there is a far greater degree of public knowledge and information available about **smoking compared to wood smoke.**

Yet they are quite equivalent in their dangerous chemical emissions.

Put "tobacco" into MLHU search engine and get over 30 results.

Put "wood smoke" or "outdoor burning" in MLHU search engine and get nothing.

2) Despite the insanity of dispatching a diesel (Group 1 carcinogen) burning, fuel-inefficient fire truck and crew (expensive!!!) to referee outdoor fires, even if a person wanted to invoke the practice, say because they are being blanketed in a dangerous smoky haze and being made quite ill, said person **can often not even actually know where the source of the fire(s) are originating from, especially under the cover of darkness, it is often a mystery and yes smoke travels.**

So, unless you have a clear visual on the offending fire(s), you are out of luck with getting the so called "relief".

And besides , lets be realistic, **the damage is often already done (inside and outside your home, ie. you've already been exposed to this pollution) and so it is not something that can be reversed with a visit from the LFD,** even if you had a clue where the fire was originating from.

3) I will share a real life story to further illustrate how thoroughly ineffective and impractical this complaint process actually is.

One gentleman summed up the lodging of a complaint as per the by-law as "pitting neighbour against neighbour".

The family apparently is not supposed to have a "nuisance" inflicted on them in the first place,

but somehow the numerous people burning fires nearby have mysteriously overlooked that fact, or they wouldn't have had a fire in the first place.

After phoning in complaints to the fire department, they received retaliation for exercising their right to complain under the current open air burning by-law.

They received threats and property damage in retaliation for the LFD showing up, and no solution to the ongoing problem.

I've heard the same basic story numerous times.

4) Heard often - **The "nuisance" simply continues unabated, even after multiple LFD visits.**

Since there simply are no safe levels of exposure to wood smoke, how then can a person not create a nuisance every single time a fire is legally or illegally lit?

Wind speed, atmospheric moisture, quality of wood, none change the fact that the practice is arcane and dangerous to everyone, never mind the vulnerable citizens that it effects even more severally.

No matter how "air tight" a home may be, the tiny particles will invade your home, and levels will remain elevated inside and outside, well into the next day. Inside or outside you will be subjected to the ill effects.

It is much much more than a so called "nuisance".