



**Submission to Net Zero Committee regarding Asthma and Lung UK Scotland
Petition PE2123 Update air quality standards in Scotland to align with 2021
World Health Organisation guidelines.**

The amount of evidence showing the role that air pollution plays in exacerbating and causing a variety of illnesses is well documented throughout the world.

It is a fact that PM2.5 levels remain high across Scotland particularly in Autumn and Winter. One cause of this is the rise in the sale and use of woodburning stoves and the use of other types of solid fuel for domestic combustion, which according to [research from 2020](#) is mostly used for comfort and aesthetic purposes rather than out of necessity of heat provision.

In the UK, domestic combustion contributed 20 % of total PM2.5 emissions in 2023. In recent years, most emissions from domestic combustion came from households burning wood indoors, which contributed [11 per cent of total PM2.5 emissions in 2023](#).

According to [research](#) reported in the New Scientist back in 2022 , the pollution from using woodburning appliances for heating and/or cooking are responsible for 48% of the health costs from air pollution in the European Union and the UK. The [latest report](#) by the European Environment Agency states that 259,000 premature deaths per year in the EU could be avoided if PM2.5 emissions were lowered.

The EU's revised Ambient Air Quality Directive, adopted on October 23, 2024 intends to raise standards of air quality closer to the 2021 World Health Organisation's latest recommendations. We believe that Scotland should do this too. The 2021 WHO guidelines have the potential to improve public health and ease the burden on the NHS of having to deal with all the many symptoms of the many illnesses that air pollution causes and contributes to.

Ends