# Case Report

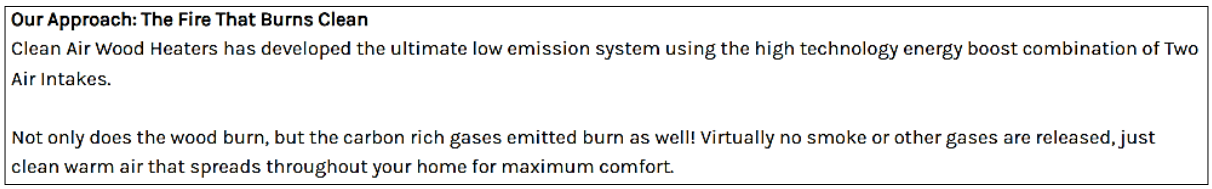
**Case number:** 0229-26
**Advertiser:** Clean Air Wood Heaters
**Medium:** Website
**Decision date:** 9-Sep-2026
**Decision:** Breach
**Action:** Ad not amended or removed

## ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE COMMUNITY PANEL

- AANA Environmental Code - 1. Truthful & Factual - breach
- AANA Environmental Code - 2. Evidence - breach

## AD DESCRIPTION

This website promotes the advertiser's wood heaters. On its 'Environmental Impact' page, it claims, 'Not only does the wood burn, but the carbon rich gases emitted burn as well! Virtually no smoke or other gases are released, just clean warm air that spreads throughout your home for maximum comfort.'


**Our Approach: The Fire That Burns Clean**
Clean Air Wood Heaters has developed the ultimate low emission system using the high technology energy boost combination of Two Air Intakes.

Not only does the wood burn, but the carbon rich gases emitted burn as well! Virtually no smoke or other gases are released, just clean warm air that spreads throughout your home for maximum comfort.

## SUMMARY

### Complaint

A complaint was received on the grounds that the advertiser's claim was not supported by any evidence, and that the advertiser had no reasonable grounds for making this claim.

The complainant argues that virtually all tests conducted on new wood heaters in peoples' homes show that these heaters emit just as many pollutants as was the case 20 years ago, and at levels substantially higher than the relevant standards.

The complainant was unable to find any research or test data for the advertiser's product. In addition, research has shown typical real-world use of such heaters would reach the annual acceptable World Health Organisation smoke limits within a few hours.

### Advertiser response

The advertiser did not submit a response.

### Decisions

The Panel found that the ad was in breach of Section 1 and Section 2 of the AANA Environmental Claims Code as the advertiser did not provide any evidence to show that its claim was valid or supported by evidence.

## ASSESSMENT AND DECISIONS

**Section 1 (AANA Environmental Claims Code): Environmental claims in advertising must:**

**a. Be truthful and factual. The overall impression created by the advertisement including the environmental claim should not be false or inaccurate.**

**b. Not be or likely to be misleading or deceptive to the target consumer.**

The Practice Note states:

> It is not intended that legal tests be applied to determine whether advertisements are misleading or deceptive, or likely to mislead or deceive, in the areas of concern in this Code.
>
> Instead, consideration will be given as to whether the target consumer would likely be misled or deceived by the Advertising.
>
> Any environmental claim should be accurate, true and factually correct.

### Panel assessment

The Panel considered that the claim appears on the advertiser's website, is under its direct control, and appears to promote the product on the basis that it burns up all carbon emission gases, and that 'virtually no smoke or other gases are released'. The Panel considered that this statement appears to draw the attention of the public in a manner calculated to promote or oppose directly or indirectly a product.

As such, the Panel considered that the claim, as it is presented on the advertiser's website, constitutes advertising as defined in the Code.

The Panel, therefore, had to determine whether the claim in this ad constituted an 'environment claim' as defined:

> 'Environment Claim means any message or representation (including text, images, graphic, audio or symbolic representation) that gives the impression that an industry, business, product or service:
>
> - has a neutral or positive impact on the environment
> - is less harmful for the environment than alternatives, or
> - has specific environmental benefits.'

The Panel considered that the claim appears under the advertiser's 'Environmental Impact' banner. The Panel considered that this signals to the reader that the information deals specifically with the product's impact on, or benefit to, the environment. The Panel further considered that smoke pollution is of significant concern to the community. In this context, the Panel considered that the claim to release 'virtually no smoke or other gases' suggests that this product is less harmful for the environment than alternatives and likely has a neutral or positive impact on the environment because it does not release smoke or other gases.

As such, the Panel was satisfied that the ad made an 'environment claim' as defined in the Code. The only remaining question, therefore, was whether the claim was truthful and factual.

In this regard, the Panel noted that the advertiser did not respond to the complaint. The Panel also considered that the website provided information about safety standards and build specifications, but nothing that could be considered evidence of the environment claim.

The Panel noted that the complainant provided supporting documentation to show that wood heaters generate as much pollution today as it did 20 years ago, and that these heaters do not comply with applicable standards, which means that real-world use generates significant levels of smoke and pollution comparable to passive smoking. The advertiser did not respond to these allegations, and did not provide anything to contradict the complaint or justify its claim.

Accordingly, the Panel considered that it was not presented with any evidence to show that the advertiser's environmental claim was truthful or factual.

### Panel decision

The Panel found that the ad breached Section 1 of the AANA Environmental Claims Code.

**Section 2 (AANA Environmental Claims Code): Environmental claims in advertising must be supported by evidence.**

The Practice Note states:

> Advertisers should have reasonable grounds for making an environmental claim, based on evidence held at the time the claim is made.
>
> Environmental claims in advertising must be substantiated and verifiable.
>
> Advertisers must be able to support claims at the time the claim is made but are not necessarily required to include that supporting information in the advertisement unless it is required to make the claim true. Additional information provided must be truthful and not misleading. Supporting information held by advertisers at the time a claim is made must include sufficient detail to allow evaluation of a claim by the target consumer.

### Panel assessment

The Panel considered that the advertiser provided no evidence of its environment claim. The Panel also considered that the advertiser's website did not appear to provide evidence for this claim.

### Panel decision

The Panel found that the ad breached Section 2 of the AANA Environmental Claims Code.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The Panel found that the ad did not breach any other section of the relevant advertising codes.

## ACTION

The advertiser has not responded to the breach decision.