

## PPCB to impose ban on functioning of brick kilns

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LUDHIANA: Acknowledging that pollution levels rise in October-December period every year, the Punjab Pollution Control Board (PPCB) has decided to impose a ban on functioning of brick kilns. The decision has been taken after witnessing higher pollution levels in various cities of the state, including Ludhiana, due to stubble burning and bursting of crackers on Diwali and Gurburb.

Before implementing the ban, the department has given 30 days period to the owners of brick kilns to register their objections with regard to the decision.

According to the PPCB officials, there are over 3,000 brick kilns in state, whereas in Ludhiana there are around 350 brick kilns. "These kilns start functioning after September when rainy season gets over and on an average produce more than 50,000 bricks," the officials said.

They further said that during these three months, pollution levels remain on a higher side due to stubble burning and bursting of crackers in festivals. "From these kilns pollutants like carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide are released and due to moisture in air, the particles grip the clear sky," they added.

The PPCB chairman Kahan Singh Pannu said that the decision will help in reducing the pollution levels.

Meanwhile, the brick kiln owners have shown resentment against this step and said that that the department has failed in

taking measures against the farmers and burning of crackers. "PPCB is trying to spoil their business and they will get their objection registered," said a kiln owner.

Notably the pollution levels had remained high in the end of October and beginning of November. The PPCB officials had closed down the brick kilns for a few days to reduce the pollution level but it could not yield results.