



Smoke Bulletin

When wildfires create smoky conditions it's important for everyone to [reduce their exposure to smoke\(PDF\)](#).

Wildfire smoke irritates your eyes, nose, throat, and lungs. It can make it hard to breathe and make you cough or wheeze. Children, pregnant women, and people with asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), or heart disease, need to be especially careful about breathing wildfire smoke.

Keep smoke outside.

- Choose a room you can close off from outside air.
- Set up a portable air cleaner or a [filter\(PDF\)](#) to keep the air in this room clean even when it's smoky in the rest of the building and outdoors.

Reduce your smoke exposure by wearing a [respirator\(PDF\)](#).

- A respirator is a mask that fits tightly to your face to filter out smoke before you breathe it in.
- You must wear the right respirator and wear it [correctly\(PDF\)](#). *Respirators are not made to fit children.*
- If you have heart or lung disease ask your doctor if it is safe for you to wear a respirator.
- Avoid using candles, gas, propane, wood-burning stoves, fireplaces, or aerosol sprays and don't fry or broil meat, smoke tobacco products, or vacuum.
- If you have a central air conditioning system, use high efficiency filters to capture fine particles from smoke. If your system has a fresh air intake, set the system to recirculate mode or close the outdoor intake damper.

AQI colors

EPA has assigned a specific color to each AQI category to make it easier for people to understand quickly whether air pollution is reaching unhealthy levels in their communities. For example, the color orange means that conditions are "unhealthy for sensitive groups," while red means that conditions may be "unhealthy for everyone," and so on.

Air Quality Index Levels of Health Concern	Numerical Value	Meaning
Good	0 to 50	Air quality is considered satisfactory, and air pollution poses little or no risk.
Moderate	51 to 100	Air quality is acceptable, however, for some pollutants there may be a moderate health concern for a very small number of people who are unusually sensitive to air pollution.
Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	101 to 150	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is not likely to be affected.
Unhealthy	151 to 200	Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
Very Unhealthy	201 to 300	Health alert: everyone may experience more serious health effects.
Hazardous	301 to 500	Health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.

Pets and other animals can be affected by wildfire smoke too.

- Learn how to protect [pets\(PDF\)](#) and [livestock\(PDF\)](#).
- Some evacuation centers do not accept animals.

Personal protection

- Stay indoors as much as possible and limit your exposure to the sun
 - Stay on the lowest floors, out of the sunshine if air conditioning is not available
- Dress in loose fitting, lightweight, light colored clothing that covers as much of the skin as possible
- Check on family, friends, and neighbors who are at risk and may need additional assistance
 - Infants (0-4), elderly (>65), overweight, ill, taking certain medications, work/exercise outdoors
- Know the symptoms of heat-related health issues such as heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke and seek medical attention if health conditions are severe. http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/heat_guide-page-3.asp
- Bring your pets indoors or ensure they have a cool sheltered area with plenty of water

<https://cfpub.epa.gov/airnow/index.cfm?action=aqibasics.aqi>

References

- <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/wildfires/duringfire.html>
- <https://www.onemedical.com/blog/live-well/protect-wildfire-smoke>