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Public Health Officer

Public Health Advisory

Smoke from Wildfires Affecting Air Quality

Smoke from the Camp Fire in Butte County is affecting our air quality and has created a potential health hazard in Stanislaus County. Based on current air quality levels, Stanislaus County Public Health is not recommending school closures or cancelling normal business activities.

For the General Public:

Please be aware that poor wildfire containment and shifting winds can drastically change air quality in a short period of time. Smoke from wildfires can affect health. The most common symptoms are eye and throat irritation, coughing, and difficulty breathing. Persons with health problems, especially heart or respiratory conditions, should take extra caution. Follow these precautions to protect your health:

- Minimize outdoor activities
- Stay indoors with windows and doors closed as much as possible
- Do not run fans that bring smoky outdoor air inside
- Run your air-conditioner or heat only if it does not bring smoke in from the outdoors
- Consider leaving the area until smoke conditions improve if you experience symptoms related to smoke exposure
- Know current air quality by checking at <https://www.valleyair.org/myraan/>

For Outdoor Workers:

- Limit exertion
- Take frequent breaks
- If prolonged outdoor activity is unavoidable, proper masks (for example N95 masks) can protect against harmful exposure
- Bandanas and typical surgical masks DO NOT protect against wildfire smoke particles
- Consult with your employer if you have specific concerns

For Schools:

- Outdoor activities should be limited
- Windows and doors should be kept shut as much as possible
- When air quality is unhealthy, activities such as athletic events or practices should be cancelled or rescheduled. Unhealthy is when the Fine Particulate Matter in air is greater than 55 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.
- Watch for symptoms and take action as needed
- Students with asthma should follow their asthma action plans and keep their quick-relief medicine close at hand

When to Seek Medical Attention:

Contact your health care provider if you experience the following symptoms that do not improve after moving indoors or into a safe air quality environment:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Wheezing
- Chest tightness or pain
- Palpitations
- Nausea or unusual fatigue
- Lightheadedness and/or feeling faint

As always, if you or someone you know is experiencing an emergency, call 9-1-1.

Additional Information:

San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District: <https://www.valleyair.org/Home.htm>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/wildfires/index.html>

California Department of Public Health: https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/EPO/Pages/BI_Natural-Disasters_Wildfires.aspx
